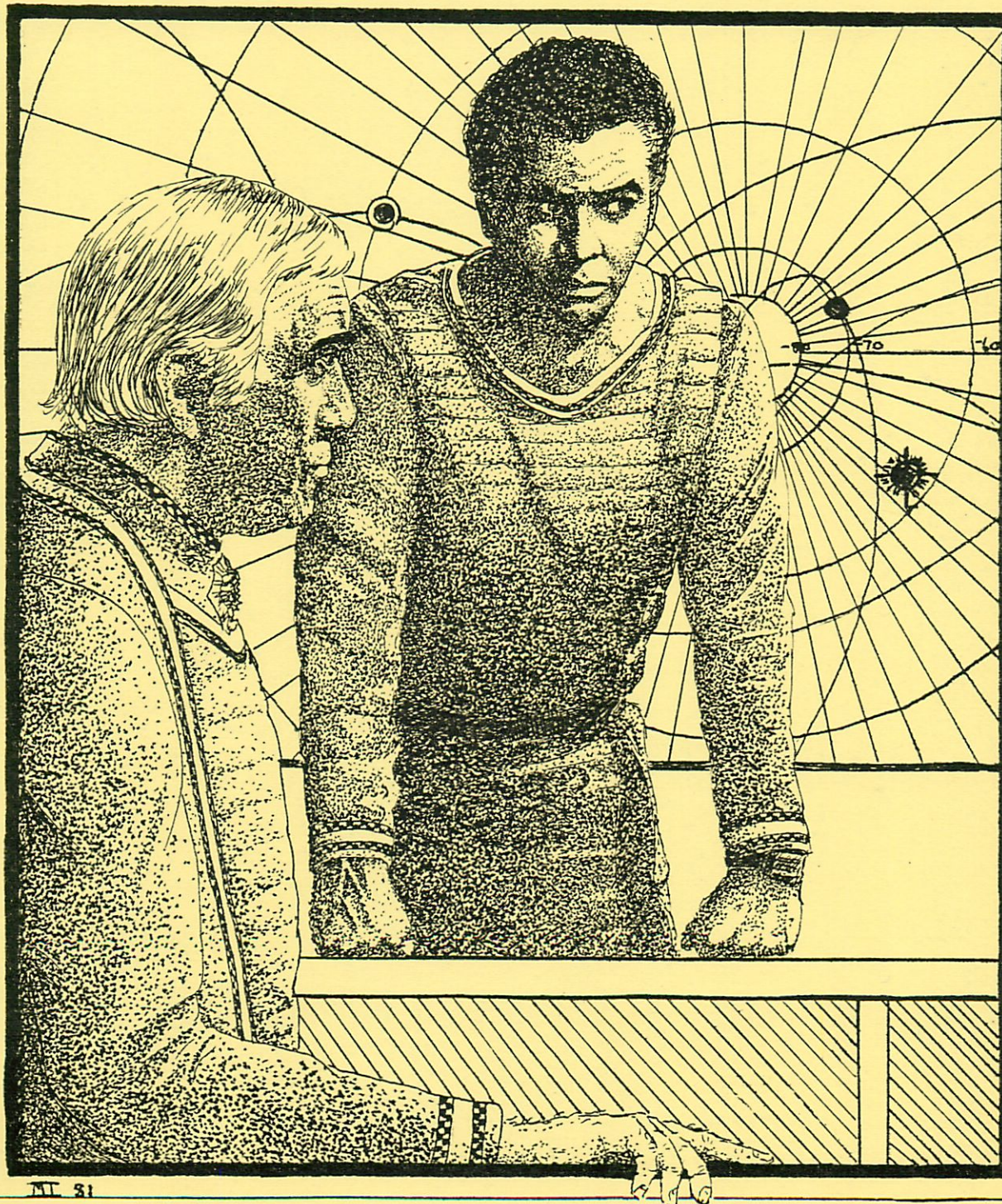


PURPLE & ORANGE?

#9



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EPISODE GUIDE

The following is a list of all episodes of BATTLESTAR GALACTICA* that appeared on ABC network television during the 1978/79 television season, along with their broadcast dates.

9/17/78	"Battlestar GALACTICA"	2/18/79	"Murder on the RISING STAR"
9/24/78	"Lost Planet of the Gods" (Part I)	2/25/79	"Greetings from Earth" ¹
10/01/78	"Lost Planet of the Gods" (Part II)	3/11/79	"Baltar's Escape"
10/08/78	"The Lost Warrior"	3/18/79	"Experiment in Terra"
10/15/78	"The Long Patrol"	4/01/79	"Take the CELESTRA"
10/22/78	"The Gun on Ice Planet Zero" (Part I)	4/08/79	"Fire in Space" ²
10/29/78	"The Gun on Ice Planet Zero" (Part II)	4/29/79	"The Hand of God"
11/12/78	"The Magnificent Warriors"	6/02/79	"The Living Legend" (Part I) ²
11/19/78	"The Young Lords"	6/09/79	"The Living Legend" (Part II) ²
11/26/78	"The Living Legend" (Part I)	6/16/79	"The Young Lords" ²
12/03/78	"The Living Legend" (Part II)	6/23/79	"The Long Patrol" ²
12/17/78	"Fire in Space"	7/07/79	"The Gun on Ice Planet Zero" (Part I) ²
12/24/78	"Lost Planet of the Gods" (Part I) ²	7/14/79	"The Gun on Ice Planet Zero" (Part II) ²
12/31/78	"Lost Planet of the Gods" (Part II) ²	7/21/79	"War of the Gods" (Part I) ²
1/14/79	"War of the Gods" (Part I)	7/28/79	"War of the Gods" (Part II) ²
1/21/79	"War of the Gods" (Part II)	8/04/79	"The Man with Nine Lives" ²
1/28/79	"The Man with Nine Lives"		

¹Two-Hour Episode

²Repeat

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PICKING UP

AND

TAKING OFF



"Picking Up and Taking Off"

(By Honore Bryte)

Silence reigned over the rocky plain, except for the whistling of the cold wind blowing sand against the small shelter of metal parts. A young man sat on a rock before that shelter, watching the stillness, listening to the silence. His blond hair blew wildly across his eyes; carelessly, he brushed it aside. Sand stung his blue eyes into tears; he blinked them away.

Sometimes he thought there was nothing left in the universe but sand, wind, cold, and loneliness. The terrible loneliness, intensified tenfold since he'd sent Angela and the child to the stars and -- hopefully -- to safety. Loneliness worsened by the death of Cy, a fellow castaway on this lost planet. Only centars before, he saw the small spaceship blast off to the heavens, faced three Cylons intent on his death, saw Cy fall. He mourned, remembering what Cy once said.

"Not a human and a Cylon. Friends."

He'd forgotten how lonely it could be here. Cy, then Angela, came into his life, and somehow filled it. The GALACTICA was long gone, with her people, his friends. Now he was truly alone, and it hurt -- hurt terribly. Facing a lifetime of emptiness, more of the awesome aloneness, days stretching into sections, sections into yahrens, all alone, empty, facing the constant wind, the long dry days, the cloudless starry nights, the moons rising with no one to share them. Lords, how could he bear it? How could any man bear to spend eternity in this kind of Hades? And to Starbuck, it was nothing less than Hades, with only one escape -- death. He knew he'd welcome it when it came.

"No!" He hadn't had time to consider all this before he found Cy and repaired him. He'd been too busy being optimistic, making a shelter and finding water. Now he was alone again, and truly realised what "alone" meant.

"No!" he screamed again. His tears now weren't from sand stinging his eyes. They were his only answer to the horror life might be on this lost, dry world.

Finally, the cold reminded him the sun had set. He was chilled to the bone; the third moon was rising, and he would probably freeze to death if he didn't get inside the shelter.

Listlessly, he rose from his rocky seat and turned to the small, insignificant shelter on the shadowed plain. Cylon-forged metal, plates and sheets from a Raider, used to create walls for a human habitation. It was a small, empty place, nearly as desolate as his heart.

What, he mused, would later discoverers of this planet think, finding forged metals where there was no other life or technology? What would they deduce from his bones, probably found bleaching at the bottom of some cliff or resting in his bed? He still cursed the Cylons for crashing their ship into so many pieces. If it had been whole, if he'd been able to create a larger vehicle, he might have had a chance. Now, he'd sent away his only hope of escape. If only...

He stood stock-still, frozen in his tracks, eyes wide. A ship! A Cylon ship!

He laughed out loud for the first time that long day. Why worry about the past or bemoan Angela's going? Those Cylons that died today, how had they gotten here? A ship! Of course! He'd find their ship. He could still escape! He laughed again, chiding his own foolishness for having forgotten.

A gust of wind nearly knocked him off his feet. He hurried to the shelter, quickly kindled a fire, and wrapped himself in his thermal blanket.

He'd find the ship, and leave this forsaken place. But that was for the morning. Warm, contented thoughts filled his mind as he fell asleep.

* * * * *

"Damn!"

Starbuck shook his fist -- the healthy one -- at the console. He'd just managed to hit his thumb again. Trying to wire this ship so he could fly it alone was proving a tiresome job. He didn't

have the right tools, and he was guessing at the wiring schematics. In fact, he wasn't sure a Cylon ship could be flown without a three-man Cylon crew -- or two humans. He knew two humans could fly it...

He considered trying to repair Cy again. Twice over the past section, he'd pulled out the manual and torn wiring from the three destroyed Cylons now resting next to his shelter. Unfortunately, something didn't work right. He couldn't get Cy to function again.

Well, Cy probably wouldn't be himself anyway, having vital circuitry blown away like that. Starbuck would have to break him in all over again, and he wouldn't be the same Cy. But now, with the mess he was making of the Cylon control panel, Starbuck knew he wouldn't get anywhere with it, so he might as well try to repair Cy again. It filled the evenings, and it gave him something to hope for, companionship to look forward to.

Trudging back to the shelter a mile away, he wondered what he was doing wrong. According to the manual, the Cylon should be fully operational, but somehow...

Sitting beside the fire, finishing a meagre supper, Starbuck contemplated the disassembled Cylon and the multitude of parts surrounding it. His brow furrowed as he picked up the manual on Cylons and compared the diagram with the one he was working on. Hmmm, trace this wire through and hook it with the proper conductor coil, then run it back over this series of breakers...

"What...? Starbuck, you son of a daggit, how could you miss something so obvious?" Starbuck talked to himself a lot these days. "It's simply a matter of having your secondary Trian coil hook up with the blue wire instead of the silver one!" He also exaggerated the colour difference between the wires. The difference in colour was minute, and probably an accident. Considering the light he was working in, it was understandable he'd made the wrong connection.

Fingers fumbled over the wiring change, double-checked connections, compared more diagrams. Now, he thought, now they looked right. Should he turn on the power?

No. He forced himself to set the control box aside. If something went wrong, if Cy worked but didn't remember him, Starbuck didn't want to deal with an angry Cylon in the middle of the night. With a sigh, he rolled over to try and get some sleep.

Morning was a long time in coming. Starbuck finally stirred after a dream-haunted, wakeful night. It was barely dawn. He forced himself to consume a meal and wait for sunrise. Then, with the moons setting in what was west, and the sun rising in what was east, he waited in the new light, breathless with anticipation, controls in hand, Cy propped before the door.

"Let's hope this works, Starbuck, 'cause I can't think of anything else to try. Cy, I hereby give you back life." He flipped the switch. "I'm resurrecting you!"

He waited expectantly, remembering it took several centons for Cy to return to life the first time. Long moments passed, and hope slowly died in Starbuck's heart. His smile faded. After a centar, he turned away and began a slow walk to the distant spacecraft still waiting to be finished. Angrily, he blinked away the hopeless tears.

"Well, what did you expect?" he demanded of himself. "Cy to wake up and say, 'Starbuck, old buddy, thank you,' maybe? Fool! If you want to get off this rock, you'll have to do it yourself, and hope you can find something better." Bitterly, he kicked at the dust and rocks lining the path across the plain. It would be a long day.

Time slipped by. Starbuck paid no attention. He buried his mind and hands in trying to make sense of the alien wiring system. He suddenly realised the day was gone when the strong winds of dusk blew up, and he felt their chill sinking into him. With a shiver, he set aside the almost-useless tools and began the long, cold trek home.

"Home," he mused. "I'm thinking of that tin can as home. Have I really sunk that low? Maybe I'll never get off this rock. The Raider'll probably work as well as Cy did." The bitter wind matched his spirits. He wasn't watching where he was going.

In the dark, he didn't see the rock. He hit it, stumbled, and tumbled full length to the ground.

He lay still for a moment before pulling his feet back under him. Metal hands suddenly took hold of his arms, lifting him, then carrying him like a child.

For only a micron, fear caught Starbuck's breath in his throat. Then...

"Cy?"

"Yes-Starbuck. I-thought-you-had-more-sense-than-to-be-out-on-a-night-like-this. You-will-freeze. Humans-are-so-flimsy."

"Cy! It is you! But what...? How...?"

"It-took-time - for-a-power-charge-to-build-up - after-the-circuitry - controlling-my-power-surges - was blasted. I-have-prepared-a-fire-and-fuel-for-you. I-thought-you-would-know-enough-to-return-when night-fell. Finally-I-came-looking-for-you."

"Cy." Starbuck couldn't stop his tears. "You're really back, just like you were. Lords..." He hiccupped.

"Did-you-bring-me-back-to-life-merely-to-rust-me-to-death?"

Starbuck laughed. "You can put me down now. I can walk."

"I-think-not. My-thermal-receptors-indicate-your-body-temperature-is-below-human-standard-norm. We have-not-time-for-you-to-walk. You-must-return-to-the-shelter-with-all-haste."

"You're just like a mother hen, you know that?"

All this time, Cy was striding across the plain. He was already approaching the hut, glowing warm and light, a beacon of friendliness in the darkness.

"You-will-eat-and-then-sleep-Starbuck. We-will-talk-in-the-morning." The monotone was reassuring. Nestled comfortably, Starbuck was already half asleep. Once in the hut, the day finally caught up to him. Cy tucked him in when he fell asleep over his supper.

Starbuck woke with light streaming through the open door. What a dream he'd had, that Cy was back, and they were both flying out of here...

Cy! He threw off the blanket and ran out the door. Where...?

A lumbering metalloid form approached from the direction of the ship, carrying something.

"Starbuck-how-could-you-make-such-a-mess-of-a-Raider? It-will-take-days-to-repair-it."

"I thought I was repairing it."

"Repairing-it-how? For-the-scrap-debris-factory?"

Starbuck shrugged. "So I could fly it."

"When-I-have-finished-we-will-fly-it. Friends. We-will-fly-it-away-and-go-where-we-please."

"Just what I had in mind, Cy. Friends. And we'll go where we please."

"You-do-not-wish-to-return-to-your-Fleet-and-Angela-and-godson?"

"I think I'd have a hard time explaining that to the Commander. But we'll see. Maybe we'll just go where the stars take us."

"The-stars-will-take-us-nowhere. Only-the-ship-will-take-us."

Starbuck grinned, then burst out laughing. "Okay, Cy! Let's get that ship ready to take us! We've got a lot of galaxy to see!" His exuberance couldn't be gainsaid.

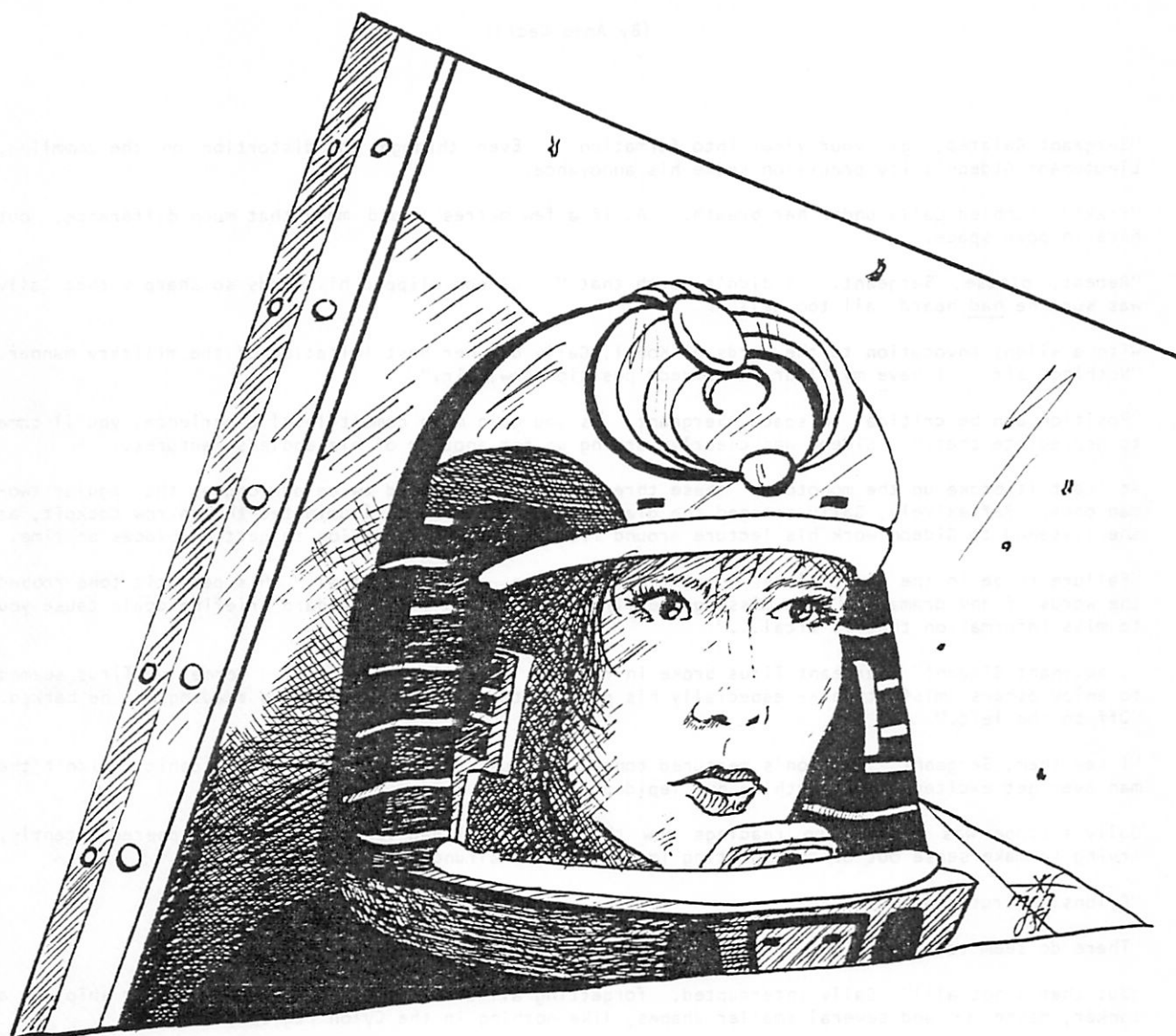
In three days, the ship was ready to fly. There were only a few things Starbuck wanted to take with him. He had food and water supplies, and his handy deck of six-sided cards. A scarf of Angela's completed the collection. Except, of course, for Cy. They stood before the Raider, taking a last look at the planet Starbuck.

"I might miss this place after all." Starbuck waxed nostalgic.

"If-you-wish-to-stay-that-can-be-arranged."

"No way! Let's go!" Starbuck hopped into the ship. Cy followed at a more sedate, clumsier pace.

Centons later, fire erupted from the thrusters of the Cylon Raider, and the small ship threw itself heavenward. Starbuck and Cy had a date with the galaxy.



Easy Looking
Anne Cecil

"Easy Looking"

(By Anne Cecil)

"Sergeant Galatea, get your Viper into formation." Even through the distortion on the comline, Lieutenant Gideon's icy precision spoke his annoyance.

"Frak!" mumbled Gally under her breath. As if a few metres would make that much difference, out here in open space.

"Repeat, please, Sergeant. I didn't catch that." Gideon clipped his words so sharply that Gally was sure he had heard, all too well.

With a silent invocation to the Lords of Kobol, Gally did her best imitation of the military manner. "Nothing, sir. I have my Viper in correct position now, sir."

"Position can be critical in space, Sergeant. As you gain more combat-level experience, you'll come to appreciate that." Gideon was clearly warming up for another of his endless lectures.

At least it broke up the monotony; these three-man patrols lasted twice as long as the regular two-man ones. Reflexively, Gally scanned the dials and readouts that illuminated the narrow cockpit, as she listened to Gideon work his lecture around from keeping in formation to getting places on time.

"Failure to be in the right place -- at the right time -- can be fatal." His pedantic tone robbed the words of any drama. "Even missing the first two centons of a standard briefing could cause you to miss information that is vital..."

"Lieutenant Gideon!" Sergeant Tirus broke in roughly, to Gally's surprise. Normally, Tirus seemed to enjoy others' misfortune -- especially his patrolmate's. "I'm picking up readings," he barked. "Off to the left."

"I see them, Sergeant." Gideon's measured tones were just the thing to quell any panic. Didn't the man ever get excited about anything but lepidoptera?

Gally's scope was picking up readings now that the patrol had veered left. She peered intently, trying to make sense out of the shifting images on the malfunctioning scope.

"Cylons!" Tirus snarled.

"There do seem to be readings in that distinctive shape," Gideon conceded calmly.

"But that's not all!" Gally interrupted, forgetting all discipline. "There's a bigger ship -- a tanker, maybe -- and several smaller shapes, like nothing in the Cylon registry."

"Sergeant," Gideon reproved her instantly, "I'm fully capable of interpreting a scan. Try to maintain discipline."

"Yessir!" Gally made a face through the cockpit window, an impolite snarl that would have been accompanied by an obscene gesture if she'd had a free hand. Since formation required that Gideon's Viper be slightly ahead of his two wingmates, it was impossible for him to see her.

"Angle off in a tracking pattern," Gideon ordered. "We don't want them to spot us. Sergeant Tirus, how many ships do you make it?"

"Two of the tanker class, seven Cylon Raiders, and five of the strange ships."

"Sergeant Galatea, what is your count?" Gideon sounded like the instructors back at the Caprican Military Academy, as formal and correct as if there were no hurry, no danger.

Gally rechecked her scope, giving it a small nudge with her knee to encourage it. It was still fuzzy, but the jiggle definitely helped. "I make it two tankers, sir." She, too, took the easy one first. "The strange ships are five in number, and there are eight Raiders. Sir."

"That matches my count exactly, Sergeant," Gideon said smoothly, as if he didn't even resent having

to acknowledge she was right.

"Frak!" Tirus said violently.

Gideon commented at almost the same moment, "It seems we're going to get a chance to observe these strange ships more closely." There was a short pause, as they all watched two of the blips swing out and begin to enlarge.

"Do we attack, sir?" Gally asked eagerly, unable to stand the suspense.

"No!" Gideon snapped. "Keep comm silence, Sergeant. They're not sure what we are, or they'd send the Raiders, too. We need the First Team for this."

Gally made another face at the window, as Gideon used the commline to contact Captain Laia, his voice dripping with respect. First Team -- that was his term for Captain Laia and the two lieutenants, Freya and Lavanna, who were her wingmates. Gideon never missed a chance to rub in his own patrol's lowly status. Maybe it was his consciousness of the fact that his wingmates were mere sergeants that made him so overbearing. Or maybe he was just practicing his flattery for the Captain.

Gally brought up her knee and jiggled the scope again. If only they had some replacement parts! But the OSIRIS was set up as an exploration ship, not a fighting battlestar. A fancy exobiological zoo took up the space normally filled with the complex machinery that turned raw ores into all the technological gadgets that made the Colonial Warriors efficient and deadly. These extra-long three-man patrols were the latest idea for stretching dangerously thin resources.

Gideon proceeded to harangue Gally and Tirus, just as if they hadn't heard his conversation with the Captain. "Captain Laia suggests we attempt to decoy these ships and avoid engaging them in battle. She expects to be here in a few centons, and will lead the engagement then. At all costs, we must avoid giving these ships time to relay word back to their masters that Colonial forces are still operating within their space. They must not suspect the existence of the OSIRIS until we have caught up with the GALACTICA and can present a united front to these mechanical oppressors."

Gideon droned on, leading the patrol on a slow drift to the right, just fast enough to stay ahead of the strangers, but not so quickly as to make identification easy. "Look like a stray meteor," Gally told her ship sternly, ignoring Gideon's repetition of fifteen facts everybody already knew only too well. Next, he'd start telling them the OSIRIS had a supply problem.

Gally shifted her weight in the padded seat, trying to rest her left arm. The Viper's designers never expected the pilot to have to hold both arms steady. All the controls were on the right side, and that arm was provided with a padded mount. The left was a standard seat arm, adequate under normal circumstances. When the stabilisers on her ship developed a minor fluke, Gally rigged a power bypass from the back-up landing system, which allowed her to feed extra power to the stabilisers and correct the situation. Her left hand held the homemade control box, with which she adjusted power levels through a simple pressure plate mechanism. Her left arm was getting very tired.

"On my command," Gideon said tightly, "turn and engage the enemy."

Gally wondered how he could be so sure they were enemies, on so little evidence. Still, at his crisp "Now!" she obediently executed a tight turn, flanking the other two Vipers as they swooped down on the investigating strangers.

Seen close up, the strangers looked surprisingly like the human ships. As she swung over one, manoeuvring to come down on its tail, Gally noted the longer body and sleeker shape. She also noted a silvery flash reflecting through the cockpit window from the place where a human pilot would sit.

The ships handled more like Vipers than the standard clumsy Cylon Raiders. The one Gally was tracking slipped sharply sideways, and would have escaped if Lieutenant Gideon hadn't been waiting to blow it away in a satisfying blue-white explosion.

"I'm hit." Tirus's voice sounded grim, dampening any elation.

"Sergeant Galatea, flank to the right," Gideon ordered, never one to let an emergency disturb the military correctness of his manner.

At three-to-one odds, the stranger had little chance; Gideon again administered the fatal beam.

"Damage report, Sergeant Tirus?"

"They must've scored a hit on my fuel tanks, sir. Everything else seems to be minor damage, but," Tirus's voice was tinged with regret, "my fuel indicator is definitely...dropping. Frak!"

"Break off action, Sergeant, and return to the OSIRIS. Sergeant Galatea, take up position on my tail and follow me. We will be engaging the enemy in approximately three microns."

About time, too, Gally thought as she took up the standard two-man position. Ahead of them, the darkness of open space was brilliantly rent by the awesome glow of one of the tankers exploding. The reflected glare, plus her trailing position, made it hard to see all the battle, though she did glimpse a Cylon Raider being chased by a Viper, and another Viper running before one of the strange ships.

Gideon chose to attack two of the Raiders, which were grouping to form a pinwheel around a Viper. Gally had time to recognise Lieutenant Freya's ship; then they were flying over, the Cylons coming into range. Gideon took out the one on the right, but missed the one on the left. Nervously, Gally squeezed her fire control, pumping it to produce short bursts of deadly energy that sprayed across empty space around the Cylon, then, as her ship crossed its path, demolished the Raider in the standard spectacular flash.

"I got one! I got one!" Gally cheered herself excitedly. Her first hit! In her excitement, she clapped both hands together, letting go of both her ship's controls and her homemade stabiliser controls at the same moment.

The Viper's designers had allowed for the possibility of the pilot's letting go of the controls; sheer momentum would simply keep the ship going in the same direction it had been following. The homemade controls were a different case.

The Viper immediately began to bob and roll, and the little control box promptly slid under the instrument panel. Gally cursed imaginatively, invoking any foul fate she'd ever heard of upon the innocent control box, while she groped futilely under the panel. While she was at it, she spared a few comments for the designer who left that neat little space below the panel for the damn thing to slide into, and who set up the seat so she had to jam her face against the cockpit window to give herself enough room to get her hand down there.

"Sergeant Galatea, what are you doing?" boomed the irate voice of Lieutenant Gideon, adding a pain in her eardrums to Gally's other immediate problems.

"Rolling, sir," she mumbled out of the side of her mouth into the commline.

"Gally? Have you been hit?" Lieutenant Freya's voice trembled with a mixture of concern and amusement. "Or are you just acting like an idiot again?"

"I'm all right -- in a micron," Gally mumbled again, trying desperately to find the stupid box. Out of the corner of her eye, she saw another familiar shape flash by -- a Raider, swinging across her flight path, intending to get behind her.

Frantically, she counted as the ship rolled again; thirteen millicentons, and there he was again, just about three metrons to the right rear. She counted as the ship rolled again, and frantically twisted to aim her lasers where three more metrons would be. Ten, eleven, twelve, fire, and blam! There he went.

"Amazing," a voice said dryly. "A new technique for taking out Cylons." Captain Laia seemed happy enough about it. Gally winced briefly, but then her hand touched the unmistakable outline of the missing box.

Once more level, Gally surveyed the scene. No more Cylon Raiders existed, and the tankers were both gone, but three of the strange ships still arced and twisted about three Vipers in paired combat. A Viper hung motionless to one side, its sleek shape now jagged where part of the undercarriage was missing.

Even as she watched, one of the Vipers still fighting took a hit and shot erratically off to the left, coming out of a turn and slowing ominously. Gally immediately clamped down on her thrusters, sending her Viper charging toward the enemy ship bearing down on the now-helpless Viper.

She swept past the Viper and began firing enthusiastically, but vainly. The enemy ship executed a tight turn, swung sharply left, then right, with Gally following and firing in repeated bursts. Neither ship gained or lost by the convoluted manoeuvres.

Abruptly, an arc of power streaked out and blew the stranger to stardust. Gally looked out in astonishment, to see the Viper she'd "rescued" hanging off to the left, in perfect position to catch the other ship.

In confirmation, Lieutenant Lavanna's lush voice came over the commline. "Thanks for the set-up,

Gally." Then, after a moment, slyly, "How'd you know my guns were still working?"

Gally ignored the teasing, scanned the area, and discovered the two remaining Vipers busily ganging up on one remaining enemy. She recognised Captain Laia, pursuing from above, as much from the neatness of her manoeuvres as from the insignia on her Viper. The Captain had obviously succeeded in demolishing her own assailant, and now polished off the lone enemy ship.

"Excellent work, Captain." Gideon's praise identified the other fighter. "Your tactical sense never ceases to impress..."

"Lieutenant Freya! Please respond!" Captain Laia cut sharply across Gideon's flattery.

There was no response; Freya's must be the ship that still drifted silently, helplessly.

Gally promptly swung her Viper around and headed straight for the wounded ship. Microns later, she announced over the comline, "She's alive! I can see her through her cockpit window! She's waving -- her comm must be out." Gally waved back at Freya, thoughtfully using her right hand, so her ship shook slightly at the sudden power drop but did no embarrassing rolls.

Captain Laia collected damage reports. Lieutenant Gideon had minor damage to one of his lasers. Lieutenant Lavanna had lost her main thrusters, but still had the slow power normally used only for docking. Gally happily reported, "No damage, Captain!"

That left Freya, an unknown quantity. And, of course, Laia, who kept any damage problems to herself.

At Laia's orders, she and Gally formed a ragged escort for the limping Lavanna, returning at agonisingly slow speed to the OSIRIS, while Gideon went on ahead at full speed to prepare the battlestar for their coming. To everyone's delight, as they started off, Freya's ship jerked into position behind them, trailing along with obvious difficulty, but coming.

Lavanna and the Captain discussed the battle and the strange new Cylon ships. The Captain remarked that they resembled sloppy imitations of Vipers.

"But they sting, Captain," Lavanna said ruefully. "Running into them is as bad as hitting a nest of wasps."

"Wasps," Laia said thoughtfully. "I suppose you could call..."

At this point, Gally's Viper emitted a metallic burp and executed a neat 180° flip, so she was flying upside down relative to her companions.

"Sergeant Galatea, are you having some problem?" Captain Laia inquired with deceptive mildness.

"I don't know what it's doing," Gally answered in some horror, "but I'm sure I can fix...ulp!" The ship flipped again, putting her back on an even course. Gally looked dubiously at the control box. Could the fall, or all that sliding around and bumping into the bottom of the panel, have ruptured something? If she'd had a free hand, she'd have pried the cover off and checked it out, but as it was, she gripped it more firmly and hoped it had worked all the nonsense out of its system.

They came into range of the OSIRIS, and Andromeda's warm tones were welcoming Orange Squadron back, when Gally's Viper made that noise again. Forewarned, she squeezed the box, but the Viper flipped itself over regardless. Gally stared dismally, and waited for the damn thing to put itself right again. Microns went by, and nothing more happened.

"Sergeant Galatea, are you aware you're flying upside down?" Captain Laia asked, a tentative note of worry in her voice, coloured by mild amusement.

"It doesn't want to go back!" Gally frowned, perplexed. "Turn over, you stupid thing!" she said fiercely to the box.

A strangled sound issued from the comm. "Perhaps you'd better wait 'til last to land," Laia said gently.

Gally swung out and assumed a waiting orbit. Letting her ship drift freed a hand. She pried the cover off the offending box. Aha! There was a loose chip. Now, for something to pry with. She unpinned one of the insignia from her uniform, and used the starburst point to poke the chip back into place. Holding the point against the chip, she squeezed the pressure plate with her other hand, and the Viper obediently rolled a precise 180° again.

Gally heaved a sigh of relief, careful not to disturb the pin or the chip. Now, all she had to do was land.

"Sergeant Galatea, we're ready for you in Landing Bay Alpha," Andromeda announced crisply. "Sorry about the delay, but the damage's all been cleared now."

"Oh?" said Gally distractedly. It had just occurred to her that she'd have to let go of the pin holding the malfunctioning chip to work the thrusters to head the ship into the landing bay. Then the Viper would promptly flip over. Making a landing in an upside-down Viper was out of the question; it was usually fatal, and generally destroyed the Viper as well.

After a moment of furious thought, Gally let go of the pin. The ship burped and, showing a comforting mechanical reliability, flipped over again. She wedged the pin against the side of the box, where it would be handy, and put her right hand back on the ship's power controls.

A few quick thrusts, and she was headed straight into the wide jaws of the landing bay, still upside down. Closer and closer came those jaws, resolving into metal docks, a brightly-lit landscape of tubes, and the waiting machinery to net the incoming Vipers.

"Now," she announced firmly, and released the thrusters. Grab the pin, jam it against the chip just so, and press. She looked up to see the edge of the deck below, even as the ship righted itself yet again and slid sedately into the bay's magnetic net.

When a white-faced, shaking technician slowly raised the cockpit canopy, Gally looked up and grinned mechanically, her eyes glazed in concentration. "I'll just be a micron," she said brightly. "I think I've got it now."

(To be continued.)



FRIENDS



by
MarJ
Ihssen

"Friends"

(By Marj Ihssen)

Sergeant Greenbean's muttering as he moved about the darkened hold didn't alarm Apollo. The young pilot had become increasingly jumpy since they began to explore the derelict, and he'd already nearly blasted several innocuous piles of debris. Not that there wasn't something eerie about this ancient ship. Her exterior was battered by the passage of countless yahrens, and burnt metal scars and jagged holes in her corridors told of her violent death, though all that remained of her crew was an occasional pile of dust and metal bits in an odd corner.

"Apollo!" This time there was startled dismay in Greenbean's voice, and Apollo felt a grating vibration through the soles of his magnetic boots. A light turned in Greenbean's direction revealed a rising cloud of sparkling bits and pieces where the young Sergeant had been.

Moving quickly but carefully, Apollo skirted piles of crates and equipment until he came within sight of the pile Greenbean had been investigating. The crates had shifted and now leaned against the wall. The only indication of Greenbean's presence was small eddies of rising debris near the top. Greenbean was buried in the pile.

"Don't move, Greenbean," Apollo ordered. "You'll need help getting out."

"I'm pinned, Captain. The straps broke. I guess I pushed too hard."

"That's all right, just hold still. You don't want the crates to shift any further." Breaking the grip of his boots on the deck, Apollo pushed up from the floor to float to the top of the pile. He re-anchored his boots on the wall and began carefully pushing the shattered crates and pieces to one side, shifting and in some cases breaking splintered points away to clear a passage for Greenbean. Then he repositioned his light and braced himself to reach in and shift the metal slab pinning Greenbean under the debris.

As Apollo repositioned his legs, he brushed against a splinter of metal projecting from one of the broken casing straps. For a micron, the microsharp point pierced his suit. The suit resealed itself, as it was designed to do, and the hole was so tiny that the delicate sensors inside the suit didn't register an air loss, or the addition of a few more molecules to its internal environment.

* * * * *

"The derelict will be broken up and fed to the factory ships in the morning." Adama placed the report on his desk and looked at Apollo, who was relaxing in a chair. "The memory banks are too old and damaged to provide coherent information, and she's too outdated for us to even attempt to restore her."

"The Fleet could've used an extra ship. The crowding's getting worse instead of better."

"It will get a lot worse," Adama replied, half to himself, watching Apollo. There were times when it was hard to remember that the GALACTICA's Flight Commander was once a small boy who cried over the death of a pet daggit, and who fell asleep countless times in Adama's lap. The man who was once that small boy would be a worthy successor when the day finally came that the GALACTICA's present Commander was called to his ancestors.

Apollo rose with a fluid movement. "We've a triad game tonight. I've got to get my reports done before I meet Starbuck." As he turned toward the door, Apollo stumbled.

"What is it?"

"Must've pulled a muscle in the workout." Apollo massaged his leg until the cramp disappeared, then straightened. "There, it's gone." He took a few experimental steps.

The sudden tenseness in Adama loosened as he watched Apollo walk to the door.

In the doorway, his son turned to look back. "Don't worry, Father, we'll win for you."

Adama smiled as he watched Apollo leave. It wasn't often he placed a bet on a triad tournament. As

Fleet Commander, he was supposed to be impartial. When the leading team was captained by his own son... And even with Tigh's help, he could never get decent odds.

* * * * *

Starbuck listened to the cheers and catcalls of the crowd as he donned his gear. It was an important game. Spirits -- and bets -- were running high. Where was Apollo? He usually came early, to discuss strategy. What could be holding him up?

Fifteen centons later, a worried Starbuck reached for the comm just as Apollo slammed into the room.

"Am I glad to see you! What took so long?"

Apollo shook his head and jerked his locker open.

Puzzled, Starbuck watched. "Apollo?"

"Starbuck, we've got a game to play. Now!" Apollo answered sharply.

The other team was already waiting on the court when Apollo and Starbuck emerged from the locker room. As they moved out onto the court, Starbuck waved cheerfully at their supporters, then turned to Apollo, only to find him scowling at their opponents. Starbuck's enthusiasm cooled. Something wasn't right... But his doubts were forgotten as they received the signal to play.

By the third quarter, Starbuck's doubts had returned, and even the crowd had quieted, sensing something out of the ordinary. Apollo played a brilliant game, the best Starbuck had ever seen. Their opponents couldn't manage a single score against the Captain.

But it was also the roughest game Starbuck had ever seen, even worse than the one when Ortega almost sent him to Life Centre. Apollo literally sent their opponents flying several times, and even -- accidentally, Starbuck hoped -- sharply elbowed Starbuck aside. By the time the game ended, everyone's tempers were dangerously explosive, and there was none of the cheering from the crowd that normally accompanied such a win. Starbuck was aware of the silence as he watched Apollo stalk off the court.

Starbuck caught up with Apollo at their lockers. "Apollo, what's eating you?"

Apollo ignored him.

"Hey, that was no way to play! You could've hurt someone!"

"So?"

Starbuck was stunned. That didn't sound like Apollo. His own temper flared, and he grabbed at Apollo's arm. "Look, Apollo..."

He never finished. He wasn't prepared for the backhand blow that sent him reeling across the room to crash into the wall. Stunned, he slid to the floor and, barely conscious, watched helplessly as Apollo finished dressing and left.

* * * * *

Starbuck wasn't the only person concerned about the triad game. Adama had watched from the lounge. He'd never seen his son play like that. Many Warriors took out tensions on the triad court, but, if anything, a problem usually put Apollo off. More than a little worried, the Commander headed for the locker room.

But the locker room was empty, except for the barely conscious Starbuck. Gentle hands helped the Lieutenant to a bench. "What happened, Starbuck?"

"I don't know, sir." Starbuck winced as Adama probed the swelling on his head. "I must've slipped, or something." He looked up to catch a doubtful expression on Adama's face. "I don't know, sir," he repeated. It wasn't far from the truth. He didn't know what had set Apollo off.

The growing bruise on Starbuck's face told its own tale. Adama knew it wasn't acquired in the game. There'd obviously been some sort of quarrel between Starbuck and Apollo, but unless one of them chose to lodge a complaint, there was nothing he could do. Officially.

Unofficially, he intended to have a long talk with his son.

But by the time Adama reached the bridge, Captain Apollo had already launched on his assigned patrol.

* * * * *

"Frak! It's going to be one of those patrols!" Sheba muttered to herself. Aside from curt course-change orders, there was no communication from Apollo. They must've lost the game, for him to be in so bad a mood. She'd been stuck in a conference until just before their launch, and had missed the game.

"Apollo?"

Silence.

"Apollo!"

"Clear the line, Lieutenant," Apollo ordered sharply.

Sheba was stunned. He hadn't used that tone of voice to her since...in sectors. Lieutenant? By the Lords, when they landed, she intended to have words with him. Lieutenant, indeed!

* * * * *

As the engines died, Apollo sat tensely, shaking with anger and rage. He felt as if he were caught in a whirlpool. He stared at an approaching crewman and wondered if Dr. Salik could help. But the thought of Salik set the tide of anger in him rising again. He climbed from his Viper, avoiding the crewman's helping hands. His quarters. He'd go there, he could think there. He'd be safe...

Sheba stormed from her Viper only to see Apollo disappearing from the landing bay. She followed, and a short time later knocked on his cabin door. There was no answer, although she could hear him moving around inside.

"Apollo? Come on, I know you're in there. Open up!" She started to pound angrily on the door.

She wasn't prepared for the snarling visage that finally greeted her. The angry words froze in her throat as Apollo pulled her into the cabin, his fingers digging painfully into her arms. His violent embrace nearly cracked her ribs, and his kiss drew blood. She started to struggle, striking out at him as his hand tore the front of her uniform open.

"Apollo!" She wrenched one hand free, tried to slap his face. "Apollo!"

With a sudden moan, he threw her from him and stormed out into the corridor. "Leave me alone!" His cry seemed to echo through the cabin long after he was gone.

Shaking, Sheba pulled herself from the tangle of chair and corner where she'd landed, wincing as strained ribs and muscles protested. What happened? That certainly wasn't the Apollo she knew. Had he broken under some sort of pressure? Her heart wanted to say no, but her sore ribs and bruised lips told another story.

Locking the door behind her, Sheba left the cabin. Maybe Starbuck would know what was going on.

Starbuck was in the Officers' Club. His blond head was bowed between his shoulders, as he gloomily contemplated the contents of a mug. He barely stirred when Sheba slid into the seat opposite him; he wasn't particularly anxious to listen to another solicitous inquiry.

"Starbuck?"

He looked up, hearing the fear, the worry in her voice, and saw her bruised lips, the careful way she sat.

"Apollo?" she asked, reaching careful fingers to touch the bruise and the visible line of a sealed cut at his hairline. Starbuck nodded. "Starbuck, what's wrong with him? What's happened? It's like he's another person. I don't know him. He... He... Starbuck, has this ever happened before?"

"No." He could offer no reassurance. He'd been asking those same questions himself. Lords, what had happened to Apollo?

* * * * *

The object of their discussion stalked toward the launching bay. Apollo knew he was losing his

fight, knew his control was going. Memories of Starbuck's bleeding face and the horror in Sheba's eyes added to the turmoil raging through him. He must be losing his mind, to hurt them so... Going crazy...

A small core of sanity deep within him told him he must get away, run, before he hurt anyone else.

The launching bay was almost empty when Apollo reached it. There was no remaining pool of sanity in his mind as he slunk to the nearest Viper. He was up the steps and into the cockpit before the mechanic on duty could stop him.

The crewman didn't recognise the Warrior in the cockpit, whose face was twisted as if in pain, or... "Hey, you can't use this ship, the ignition sys..." He never finished. In one blurred movement, Apollo drew his laser and cut him down, then viciously punched the switch that lowered the canopy and, ignoring all pre-flight checks, hit the turbo ignition.

Nothing happened. He tried the secondary system, but the only response was a burst of electricity that burnt his fingers. Screaming in rage, Apollo pounded the controls, then hit the canopy ejection switch and vaulted out of the fighter. Looking for another ship, he spotted several black-clad figures with drawn lasers heading in his direction.

Snarling, Apollo drew his own weapon again and fired, forcing the Security men into cover. Then he fled, seeking the safety of the darkened corridors beyond the launch tubes.

* * * * *

The intruder alert from Alpha Bay drew Tigh and Adama to the command console. Tigh leaned over Omega's shoulder, questioning the bay personnel.

"Someone tried to take a damaged Viper out, wounded the mechanic working on it, and took several shots at bay personnel and Security before fleeing into the D-Level corridors," the bay officer reported.

"Any casualties?"

"Other than Donals, the mechanic, nothing serious. Dr. Salik is with him, and we should have a report soon."

"Any identification on the intruder?" Adama asked.

"I'm running the scan back now, sir," Omega replied as one viewing screen flickered and changed to a picture of a partially powered-down launching bay. The figure approaching the Viper wasn't visible until it mounted the steps, and its back was to the scanner as it slid into the cockpit. Tigh winced as the mechanic was cut down in a soundless burst of laser fire. But that fire triggered the intruder alert, and other scanners switched on. Adama froze as one shot clearly caught the intruder's face.

"Apollo!" Tigh glanced at Adama, then back at the screen, where the intruder fired at the Security men and ran for darkness. Adama's expression was shocked, disbelieving, and horribly hurt.

"Sir." Omega turned to Tigh. "Dr. Salik reports Crewman Donals is in critical condition. He's taking him to surgery immediately."

At those words, Adama turned from the screen and walked silently to the other side of the console.

"Sir?" Tigh followed him.

"Intruder alert, Tigh." Adama's voice was low, and Tigh flinched at the sight of his friend's pain.

* * * * *

The all-ship intruder alert sent a startled Starbuck and Sheba to the bridge at a run. They met Boomer on the way. Adama turned at the commotion they caused.

They'd never seen such an expression on the Commander's face before. Aghast, they listened as the Security forces began reporting in. One team had located Apollo. In the resulting laser exchange, three Security men were wounded, and Apollo got away. Damage Control reported a break in the bay's environmental system's circuitry, caused by incidental fire.

"Sir?" Colonel Sinon, head of the Council's security forces, approached Adama. "We've now got two critically injured people. He's going to kill someone if he's not stopped."

Tigh glared at his fellow Colonel, but Sinon ignored him, watching the Commander.

"If it is necessary to save lives, and prevent further damage..." Adama paused to clear his throat. "Captain Apollo is armed and to be considered dangerous. Do what you must to stop him."

"Commander, that's Apollo!"

Adama ignored Starbuck's outburst.

"Starbuck, don't you think he knows that?" Tigh drew the three Warriors out of Adama's hearing. "Apollo's already put two people in Life Centre, in critical condition. We can't afford to have a... a madman...running loose. No matter who he is. There's nothing you can do. Dismissed!"

The anger in the Colonel's voice left no room for argument. But outside, in the corridor, Starbuck stopped abruptly. "Nothing we can do? Felgercarb! There has to be something!"

"Something's wrong," Boomer muttered. "I refuse to believe he's gone crazy, just like that."

"There has to be a reason..." Sheba looked at the two men. None of them could think of a logical explanation for Apollo's behaviour.

"He's done some pretty crazy things in the past, but to actually shoot someone..." Boomer said.

"It's not Apollo. It's like he's...someone else."

"Something he picked up on patrol?" Starbuck asked Boomer.

"No way. You know how he is about things like decontamination."

"Yeah, he never forgets," Starbuck muttered.

"There has to be something..."

The three exchanged bleak looks, and moved back to avoid a passing Security squad. "If those guys catch him... Hades, you know how Security feels about Warriors." Starbuck paced the corridor.

"Then we find him first," Sheba stated.

Starbuck and Boomer looked at each other and grinned.

"We find him, and get him to Life Centre. Maybe Dr. Salik can find out what's wrong. And at least he'll be safe from Security," Boomer added. "I know a tech who owes me a favour. He'll know where they've tracked him to. Come on."

* * * * *

Far below, in the maze of corridors that criss-crossed the battlestar, a raging Warrior played a deadly game of hide-and-seek with the Security teams. Laser fire would send a squad of searchers scrambling for cover, and when they looked up, Apollo would be gone. They'd fan out, locate and lose him again, occasionally at the expense of one of their men. Once, they cornered him in a dead-end service corridor and filled it with stunning fire. But all they found was a ventilation grill literally ripped from the wall; Apollo was gone. Tempers grew short. Lasers were flicked from stun to full power.

In a corridor high above the GALACTICA's main thrusters, three Warriors waited.

"Are you sure he'll come this way?" Starbuck called above the engine noise.

"I plotted the contacts Security reported. He's heading in this direction. That old celestial chamber's been a favourite place of his for yahrens. If he's looking for a place to hide..." Boomer answered from where he crouched in a hatchway.

"And if he changes his mind?" Sheba asked.

"Then we play hide-and-seek with Security," Boomer stated flatly.

"Great," Starbuck growled in reply.

They couldn't hear Apollo's approach above the engine noise until he was nearly upon them, and he wasn't aware of their silent presence in the darkened corridor. But when Starbuck hesitated a micron

in aiming his laser at his friend, it was all the warning Apollo needed. He twisted and dove for Starbuck, moving with such speed that both Sheba and Boomer missed him.

Apollo's insane strength made a mockery of Starbuck's attempts to free himself. Boomer went to Starbuck's aid, but a kick sent him reeling into the wall. Then Sheba attacked, and the force of her dive loosened Apollo's hold on Starbuck.

The three sought to restrain Apollo, but in trying not to hurt him, they handicapped themselves. He had no such inhibitions. A sharp blow to Boomer's ribs sent the Lieutenant gasping to the floor. Then Apollo threw Sheba hard against a wall. Starbuck found himself being choked, and only broke free when he resorted to a blow that would have floored a normal opponent. Apollo staggered back, then drew his laser.

"No!" Boomer shouted. Still on the floor, he pulled a knife from his boot and threw. It lodged in Apollo's arm, and the laser dropped from suddenly strengthless fingers.

With a snarl, Apollo threw himself at Boomer. Starbuck tried to pull him off, but even with Sheba's help was unable to hold him. He was slipping from their grasp once again when Starbuck grabbed the fallen laser and brought the butt down on Apollo's head. The Captain collapsed.

Sheba knelt on the floor beside Apollo, crying. Boomer bent awkwardly to pull the knife from the unconscious man's arm. Quick fingers used a torn strip of uniform to staunch the bleeding.

But when the two men bent to lift Apollo from the floor, Boomer staggered and nearly fell. "I think he got a rib," he gasped, his hand gingerly exploring his side.

Changing his grip, grimacing with effort, Starbuck lifted Apollo and, holding him as he would a child, headed for the turbolift.



Dr. Salik turned in irritation at the latest interruption, but his anger died when he saw yet another casualty being carried in. He joined the med techs clustered around the bed as they stripped the jacked from the wounded Warrior and scanned for injuries.

"This is Captain Apollo!" Salik stormed, glaring at the gasping Starbuck. "This is the man Council Security's tearing the GALACTICA apart to find!"

"Yeah," Boomer commented.

"Look," Starbuck added, "just run a check on him, will you? He can't hurt anyone now, and there has to be a reason why he went...why he's acting this way."

Salik looked at the unconscious Warrior again. Starbuck had a point. It was possible Apollo's actions had a medical cause. It certainly wouldn't hurt to check.

"Get him in isolation, now!" the doctor ordered his med techs. He turned back to the three Warriors. "Security's looking for him."

"We'll handle Security. Your job is finding out what's wrong with him," Sheba answered.

There was a sudden commotion in the corridor, and the Warriors went to the entrance. The door opened to reveal an approaching squad of black-clad Security men.

"Hold it right there." Boomer stepped out into the corridor.

"We have orders to secure Captain Apollo. We know he's in there." Security Lieutenant Reese strode toward them.

The trio didn't budge, and Reese was forced to stop.

"He's safe where he is, Lieutenant." As a Warrior, Sheba outranked Reese.

The Security men behind Reese looked more prepared for a shoot-out than for confining one unconscious man.

"Lieutenant, I have my orders," Reese appealed to Sheba. The angry mutter behind him grew.

"Over my dead body!" There was no hesitation as Sheba drew her laser from its holster. The determined look on her face made Reese remember just whose daughter she was. He gulped.

"Look," Boomer said before Reese could appeal to Sheba again, "just consider us the Captain's guards. I assure you he won't go running loose again."

Reese's orders were to get Apollo, period. But he didn't think his Colonel had anticipated that would involve a shoot-out with those crazy bastards from Blue Squadron. He called for help.

Ten centons later, help arrived. A trio of officers appeared in the corridor -- Colonel Sinon, Colonel Tigh, and Commander Adama. The Security squad straightened; their lasers disappeared back into their holsters. The three Warriors stood at attention, lasers at their sides.

"What is going on here?" Adama demanded. The last thing he needed was open warfare between Council Security and his Warriors. "Well?"

"Sir, Captain Apollo is under restraint, in Dr. Salik's care. Security wants to move him. We feel this might be detrimental to his continued health." Boomer's statement won angry glares from both Sinon and Reese.

Adama glared impartially at the whole group. "Colonel Sinon, station a guard here to prevent any further trouble." He turned to the Warriors. "You three are under arrest for insubordination, and resisting Council Security."

Under the Commander's gaze, Reese carefully disarmed the three Warriors and escorted them to the detention cells.

A few centons later, the Commander was alone with Dr. Salik. "How is he?" Adama made no attempt to disguise his concern.

"Not good." Salik shook his head in worry. "Something has violently upset the chemical balance in his nervous system. There are compounds showing up in the test results that I've never seen before, and his body is reacting as if it is under extreme pressure of some kind. Every system in his body is operating wide open. He's burning himself up. If it isn't checked, and soon..." He shrugged.

"Then what happened, his actions...?"

"His behavioural aberrations were undoubtedly caused by the massive imbalances in his nervous system," the doctor replied.

"Is it contagious?"

"No. We ran a computer simulation. It's a chemical/allergic reaction of some kind. We're flushing his system now, but that's only temporary. We need to find out what triggered the reaction, how to

counteract it."

* * * * *

Cassiopeia alternately sniffed away tears and scolded as she bandaged Boomer's ribs. "Can't you ever manage to stay out of trouble?" Boomer winced as she tightened the bandage. "I'll bring in a portable bone laser later, but this should do for now." She put her small scanner away.

"You'd have done the same," Starbuck said. "We couldn't leave Apollo to them." Lords, how he hated detention!

"You don't know they'd have hurt him." Cassiopeia pulled Starbuck down on the bench to check his injuries.

"Reese and his men were ready to burn us down to get to him," Boomer replied.

"All right, so maybe they were a little upset..."

"A little upset?" Starbuck turned to stare at her, then winced as she spread an ointment on the bruise across his cheek.

"Why does it always have to be you?" she continued as if she hadn't heard his remark.

"How's Sheba?" Boomer asked, trying to change the subject.

"She'll have a headache for a couple of days. Otherwise, she's in better shape than you two."

Starbuck's hand caught her wrist tightly. "And Apollo?"

Cassiopeia shook her head. "No change, Starbuck." His hand fell away.

* * * * *

A very tired trio of Warriors staggered off a shuttle several days later. Between their normal duties and those Adama'd assigned them as punishment, they had barely enough energy to fall into their bunks for a few centars' sleep before they were roused out again.

But it was worth it. Apollo was alive and out of danger. Dr. Salik identified the compound that started the violent reaction and devised a counteragent. They traced the origin of the substance to a decomposed enzyme that had been part of the derelict's cargo, and they found the tiny hole in Apollo's suit that had admitted the nearly lethal molecules. Once inside the suit, those molecules had been absorbed by Apollo's skin, a contact poison that triggered madness.

The three Warriors were so tired that it was several moments before they realised Apollo was walking down the corridor toward them.

"Apollo!"

Starbuck's shout alerted the others, and suddenly half of Blue Squadron poured into the corridor to greet their commander. It was nearly a centar before Apollo managed to convince the impromptu party that he really was tired. It was, after all, his first day out of Life Centre.

Starbuck, Boomer, and Sheba hovered solicitously about him, fussing as they escorted him back to his quarters. He stopped them when they turned to leave.

"No, don't go yet. Starbuck, there are glasses and ambrosia in that cabinet. Get them out, will you?"

Mystified, Starbuck complied and, under Apollo's direction, filled four glasses. Apollo took one and motioned to the others to each pick up a glass. Smiling, he raised his drink in salute.

"To the best friends a man ever had."

"Amen," Adama said quietly from the doorway.

Apollo's three companions watched warily as the Commander entered, but all he did was pick up an empty glass and inquire mildly if Starbuck would mind filling it. Then, glass in hand, he turned to face all four Warriors. Time seemed frozen until he smiled and raised his glass.

"To friends."

PERSONAL LOG - FLIGHT SERGEANT MARA

(Voice code retrieval only.)

I don't care what the Captain says -- I think it's a very effective tactic, and I'm going to say so! And I'm recording how it came about.

The OSIRIS was attacked by a couple of squadrons worth of Cylons, and Purple Squadron was sent out to get rid of them. I launched with the rest of my squadron, but early in the battle I had a malfunction. My lasers quit, leaving me weaponless. The Captain ordered me back to the ship for repairs, or to get another Viper. Another pilot, by the name of Morgan, took a hit in his high engine and was also being sent back.

Now, I knew the repair crews weren't able to keep up with the work lately, and there weren't any other functional Vipers except those belonging to the other squadrons. If I went back, I'd sit out the battle in the repair bay. And I didn't like that idea at all. Neither did Morgan.

When the Cylons attacked, the OSIRIS had slowed to navigate an asteroid field we couldn't circumvent. We suspected their base star was lurking somewhere nearby, so we had to take out the attackers before they could report us. Returning to the ship through the asteroids suggested to me some of the games my brother and I used to play as children. This gave me an idea. Not wanting to alert the Cylons -- or the Captain -- to my plan, I explained it to Morgan by signs, and he understood me remarkably well.

YOU HIDE BEHIND ASTEROID THERE. I LEAD CYLON PAST. YOU SHOOT.

Morgan, having less speed and manoeuvrability -- but with functioning lasers -- hid his Viper behind a handy asteroid. I returned to the battle area and attracted the interest of a couple of Cylon ships. I turned and headed back toward Morgan's hiding place, using every evasive manoeuvre I knew. I escaped their fire, and as soon as one of their shots came dangerously close, I cut power to my engines slightly -- not enough to lose manoeuvrability, but enough to make my engines sputter and look like they were failing.

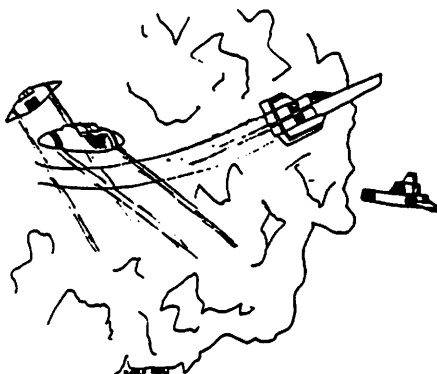
Still evading their fire, I switched my com line to a channel I knew the squadron wouldn't be using, one I thought the Cylons monitored. "Purple Six to Core Control. I am experiencing engine problems. Repeat -- engines failing. I've got a couple of Cylons on my tail. Am heading for home. Give me a hand if you can."

Later, Morgan told me he thought I'd try something like that, so he turned to that frequency, too. He was ready for me. I led the Cylons past the asteroid, and Morgan blasted them. Score two for us. I made a tight barrel roll and headed back for some more.

All in all, we got seven Cylon ships in three trips. Two, two, and three. (Morgan almost missed that last one!) By then, the Squadron had finished off the rest of the Cylons and was heading back, so we joined them. Naturally, the Captain wanted to know why we weren't back at the ship. Then some nosy com tech with nothing better to do than monitor the channel we used called to ask if that Viper with the failing engines tain put two and two together, tar-long lecture boiled down it was a stupid and dangerous again, she'd see to it we were

Well, Captain, I don't care little game of bait-and-trap, get the chance!

So there!



what you think! I like my and I'll use it again if I

WHERE

FROG?



BY DR. DORIS FISHBEIN

"Where Frog?"

(By Dr. Doris Fishbein)

Lieutenant Pygmalia of the battlestar DEMENTIA stood back from her creation, eyeing it with satisfaction. Yes, it should do very well. It looked nice, it was the appropriate bridge colour, and it had lots of room for expansion without looking baggy on her present slim figure. Pygmalia was getting very tired of replacing her uniforms, and this new design should hold together. If it did, she'd have a flight uniform to match in a few more days.

There wasn't really a lot to it. It was a basically backless, sleeveless, short-skirted creation, with only a pair of elastic trim straps across the back. The low waist was likewise elastic. The slit skirt was adjustable, as were the short shorts she wore under it. The long cape would cover a multitude of evils -- and flesh. Lots of standard issue uniform trim decorated hem and seam lines. Her Warrior's insignia attached very nicely at her left shoulder, and she'd embroidered the DEMENTIA patch low on her right side, where the skirt and bodice attached to each other.

Hopefully, the new uniform would hold together during those terrible times when they were in star systems with multitudes of moons. Pygmalia would never forgive the gollmonging Cylon that played around with her mother's genes. Because of that tinhead, she was different.

Oh, she knew the Commander was a were-frog, but he was the Commander. No one would say anything about a frog who could tear the ship apart with his bare claws. But what she became during the correct lunar configurations... She would never stop hating the Cylons.

Time to try out the new design. This would be the big test. Would this one fail as the others had, splitting apart during the moon phasing? Or had she at last found a uniform appropriate for all occasions? She picked up the long purple gloves she always wore "to protect my hands" and headed for her duty station.

Nobody complained about the uniform being non-regulation. In fact, most of the men she passed -- young, old, and crazy -- seemed to think it would be great as standard female attire.

When she reached the bridge, even Commander Morpheus seemed to find it interesting. He must have liked the style. Or maybe he was just considering her usual bad taste in colour combinations.

Lieutenant Dusseldorf slid slowly into the Commander's lap, distracting his attention. In her usual fashion, she reported a star system, whispering the information breathily into the Commander's ear, pressing against him with her well-filled uniform. Pygmalia ignored the nuzzling. If Dusseldorf wanted to hassle the Commander, that was her business.

Pygmalia's attention was soon caught by the scanners. Oh, frak! The star system ahead, with its myriad planets and moons, promised the strange configuration necessary for her change to occur. She didn't want to test the new uniform on the bridge, in front of Commander Morpheus! What if it didn't work?

Besides, she didn't even like the Commander. Lieutenant Pygmalia had discovered she took a general dislike to most sane people. She preferred the DEMENTIA crew.

Maybe she ought to leave the bridge?

Oh-oh, it was too late...

The proper phasing must be occurring. The Commander was changing. There was a ripping sound as his uniform slowly parted at the seams. He grumbled once, the sound deepening to a low "ribbit"-like noise. His skin turned greenish, and he was definitely developing claws and fangs.

It wouldn't be long. Pygmalia sighed.

She felt the change begin, as the other Pygmalia took over. It wasn't as spectacular as the Commander's, at least at first. Her normal human skin turned pinker. Her blondish-white hair became longer, coarser, but still cascaded nearly to her waist. But her waist was swelling, and she appeared to be losing height. Her luminous blue eyes retreated further into her head, away from the delicate nose that slowly broadened, flattened, as it took on the appearance of...a snout? Her per-

fect ears grew longer, pointed, then flopped over themselves.

But -- wonder of wonders! -- the uniform held. It didn't split at the seams. It didn't bunch in the wrong places. It still looked like a uniform, albeit unstandard to the nth degree.

Dusseldorf slid out of the Commander's lap as he began to change, retreating to her station. It suddenly occurred in her insane maze of a mind that something was wrong with Pygmalia as well.

"Eeeek! Another one! But this one looks like... a pig!"

The Commander heard. He turned and looked, his wide bulging eyes bulging even more. "Who, or what, are you?" he tried to say. It didn't come out quite that way.

Pygmalia didn't care. She suddenly realised she was totally, violently, insanely in love with her Commander. Maybe it was obvious from her sudden gasp, the starting of her eyes, or the suddenly audible thump-thump of her heart. Maybe it was from the way she suddenly launched herself in his direction.

"Oh, Morpheus!"

The Commander suspected something strange was going on. He knew it when he found himself in the grasp of a pink, vaguely human female form. He tried to push her away.

She came right back.

With an astonished "ribbit," Morpheus decided to leave the bridge. Pygmalia was quickly in hot pursuit.

The chase lasted for only a short while. As they were hopping and running through the maze of corridors, the DEMENTIA moved out of range of the effect of the moons. The changes began to reverse.

The Commander found himself in a little-known corridor, dressed in a torn uniform. Again.

Pygmalia felt herself return to normalcy, and for the first time ever, her uniform wasn't ripped at the seams. She let out a little shriek of delight.

The Commander, not far ahead, heard her. He glanced cautiously around a corner, to see the Lieutenant examining her uniform.

"What in Hades happens now?" he wondered aloud.

Pygmalia heard, turned, and blushed slightly. "Sorry, Commander. I didn't mean to disturb you, sir."

"You're not going to chase me any more?"

She looked puzzled. "Chase you, sir? Whatever for?"

"Never mind. Dismissed."

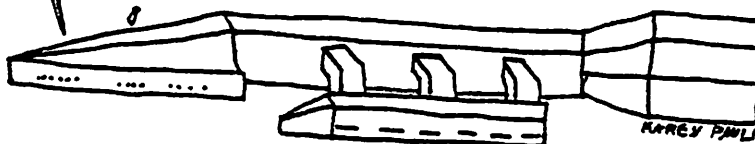
She walked daintily and primly away.

The Commander stared in bewilderment. Another of the crazy ones. But what was he going to do with a were-pig who chased him when he was a were-frog?

Ghod, what a crew!

They report they're being
attacked by giant red vegetables.

I KNEW Recreation shouldn't have
shown "Attack of the Killer Tomatoes!"



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Gunnery Notes:

Little Things

* Clyde Jones



GUNNERY NOTES: Little Things

(By Clyde Jones)

I don't know who let Thing out of the bottle.

I really don't.

At the time, I was so tired, hungover, and thoroughly annoyed with the manfunctions of this hulk's excuses for engines that I didn't notice, and wouldn't have cared if I had.

Thing. A nice, simple name for a nice, complicated phenomenon. Someone found a bottle on a planetary surface somewhere and tucked it away amongst the samples of that particular raid.

Excuse me. Looting? No -- survey. That is the polite term the scientists have for their pillaging expeditions on alien worlds.

At any rate, they brought back an opalescent glass bottle with a nice carved stopper covered with what I immediately defined as hex symbols. They were annoyed with me. They wanted the joy of staring at the sample for sectars, discussing the topic to its early demise, then coming up with a grave pronouncement.

They weren't ready for a scruffy gunnery sergeant to come clomping through their territory while trying to trace a feed line and tell them point-blank, "Looks like a hex sign there. That one's probably for warding off evil, that other thing looks like a life sign, and the other thingie is probably the maker's stamp. It's pressed, not carved. And, by the way, I think the contents are alive."

I shouldered my spanner, kept on waving the detector, and meandered out of there. At the time, I thought the momentary cryogenic chill in the air was from a malfunctioning life support module. It was probably mere professional spite.

Why tell them I hold a very minor degree in sentiology?

Also, I guess well.

But, as I say, someone let Thing out of his (her/its/whatever) bottle.

What bottle? I just told you. The opalescent one.

It took them about a section to agree that an ignorant, animal-loving low-life of a gunnery type was right. They never admitted it, of course. They came up with their own corroborative evidence. Still, the same conclusions.

Then, they finally turned off the lights in the sentiology lab. Usually, those, well, scientists just leave the lights on. Saves them that little bit of extra effort needed to engage the lighting grids. Either that, or they don't know about light switches. Anyway, they turned off the lights, and found the bottle glowing.

Not only glowing, but swirling. And responding to the presence of small point sources of light outside the bottle. And to gravity and acceleration.

They began to think of the thing as alive. And as "Thing."

I told them so.

How it wound up in my...ah, in the zoo is still unclear. Usually, when those individuals get hold of something, it takes blasting paste to unlatch it again. But there it was one "morning," sitting on the work table by the dire wolves' cages. I kind of adopted it as a pet symbol of right thinking and lucky guessing. Thereafter, most of the time it was to be found either in my "cage" -- the room I have fixed up by the #2 laser turret -- or in the zoo. Or occasionally with the astrosurvey techs who adopted it for a mascot.

I think it was happiest in my cage. I used to play to it, practice the pipes with it sitting near-

by. It seemed to like the playing. Clear proof of life.

Unfortunately, not of sentience. We all about decided Thing wasn't overly bright, intellectually speaking.

Then somebody opened the bottle at one of the slightly drunken parties the stargazers like to throw. I believe they tried to drink poor Thing. No wonder Thing got frightened and left the bottle.

That's when things got interesting. It seems the first thing Thing tried to do was hide in someone's mug. I don't know what they were drinking, but Thing sopped it right up. Came out of that mug glowing like a berserk landing beacon, careening around the room like a triad ball. Then Thing hit a ventilation duct and vanished from sight -- humming slightly. Wobbling uncertainly. Fleeing drunkenly.

Have you ever seen a pack of stoned techs hunting the corridors for a wobbly, glowing, drunken will-o'-the-wisp? Quite a sight. It was still a sight centars later when I finally dragged myself out of my rack and trundled down to the NCO open mess on Z Deck. I absorbed something laughingly called breakfast, then had a morning libation of finest ambrosia. No, not a mug. Just a sip to ease the digestion.

Ask Senbi; he'll concur. If you apply enough force to make him admit it.

At any rate, I sampled the brew, and people suddenly began to get up and slither off through any handy open doorway. Let me tell you, it gives you a really odd feeling to have people slide out on you. Makes you feel you forgot to turbowash for the last sector or so.

I turned to the barkeep and tried to ask what was going on. She just slid out of the bar with the rest of them. So I sat there with my shot glass of ambrosia, with prickling hairs at the back of my neck, and looked at myself in the mirror behind the bar. Had I sprouted horns?

Nope. Just a gentle, green glow. Apparently, when it got free, Thing also got frightened all over again. It went looking for someone or something familiar. My hair must have seemed a reasonable place to hide.

I poured myself another libation for fortification. And, lo and behold, the closer the drink got to the glow, the brighter it got. I got out my pipes and started a gentle dance tune from Caprica. The glow kind of flashed in time with it. Or maybe it was the fumes of the ambrosia.

Then I got to wondering who let Thing out of his (her/its/whatever) nice, cozy bottle. I really didn't mean to drink all that much ambrosia, even though it was my day off. Anyway, I ricocheted off the walls en route to the wardroom.

When I got there, one of the techs started to ask me, "Hey, Jones, have you seen Thing today? He got out... Eeep!"

"Whot the blazes are ye thinkin', lettin' the wee beastie out o' 'is bottle in a place the likes o' this? Whot could ye a been thinkin'...?" My voice trailed off, as did the consciousness of that tech. He fainted. Forty-two and a half Cylon attacks he withstands without a quiver, and now he faints at a little civil questioning by a perhaps slightly inebriated gunnery sergeant.

Shocking.

I reeled my way back to my cage and let myself in. The access corridor is usually a bit dark, due to the paucity of lighting. This time, however, it was nice and brightly lit. Greenly lit, I might add.

I careened down to a soft landing on my bunk, and found I had Thing's bottle -- and the cork -- in my left hand. The right was clutching my pipes. Setting the bottle carefully on the floor, I passed gently into the arms of (gently stewed) slumber.

When I awoke later that day, I found Thing nicely back in the bottle. One of it. The other -- a very tiny specimen -- seems to have taken up permanent residence in my thinning locks, there to emerge during times of imbibification, when it glows.

Well, it is handy. I really don't need to carry a flashlight any more. Just a belt-cap of ambrosial substance.

Just me and my little buddy, glowing pleasantly.

I wonder what stories this little adventure has started amongst the crew.

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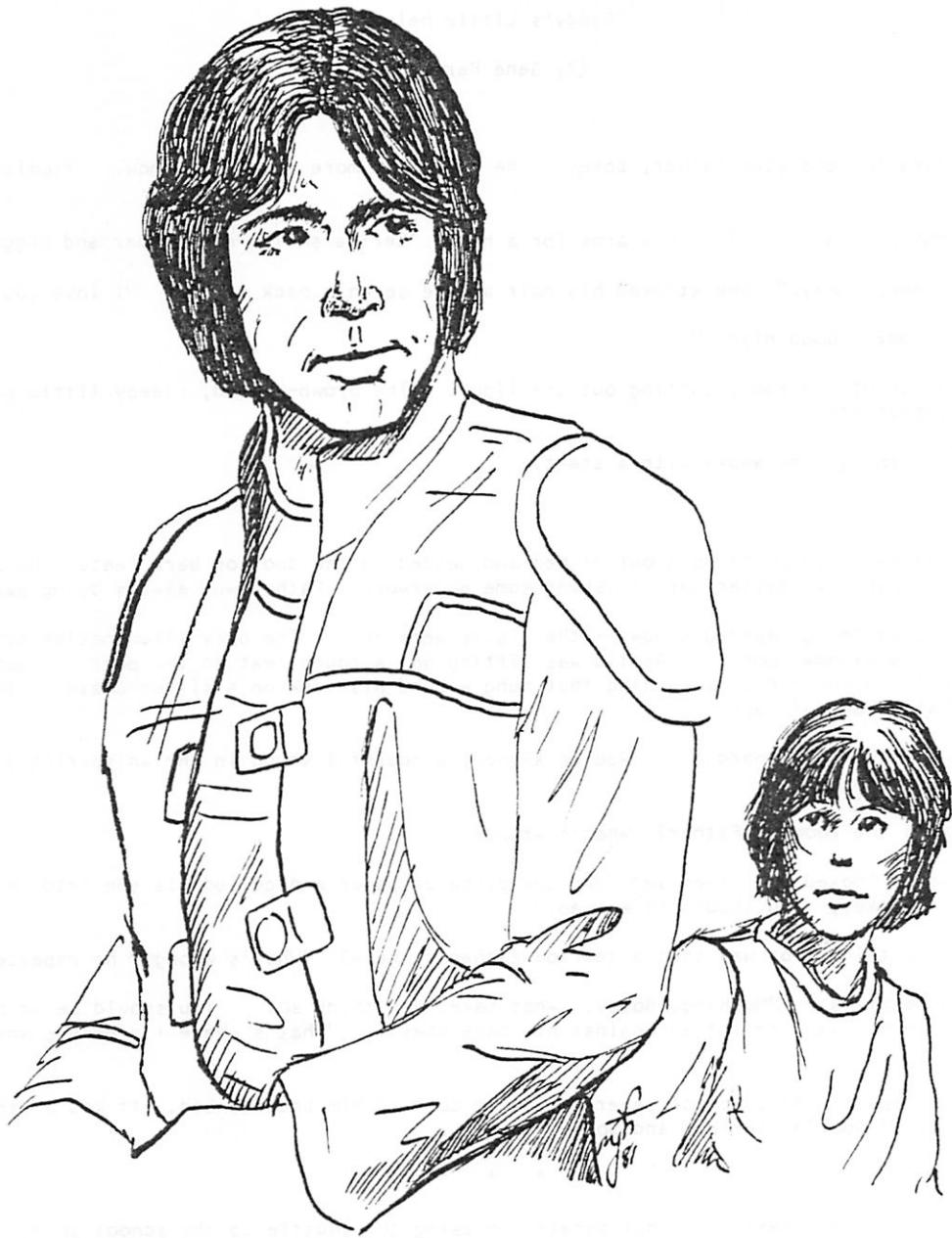
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Daddy's Little
Helper - Gene Hermesen

"Daddy's Little Helper"

(By Gene Hermesen)

"And you'll have to help your father, Boxey. He needs you more than ever, now. Promise me?" She smiled at him.

"I promise, Mommy." Boxey lifted his arms for a hug. Serina smiled even wider and hugged her son.

"I have to go now, Boxey." She stroked his hair as she set him back in bed. "I love you."

"I love you, Mommy. Good night."

Serina walked out of the room, putting out the light. The brown-haired, sleepy little boy snuggled back into his blankets.

Boxey heard something. He awoke with a start.

"Serina..."

Was that his father? Boxey climbed out of bed and padded to the door on bare feet. He peeked into the next room, where his father was finishing some paperwork. Father was always doing paperwork.

But he couldn't be doing paperwork now -- the lights were off. The only illumination came from the stars through the window port. Apollo was sitting on a couch next to the port. Something was clutched tightly in one hand, something that hung around his neck on a silver chain. In his other hand was a small piece of paper.

"Oh, Serina, I'm trying so hard..." Apollo sighed, a mournful sound in the whispering darkness, a heartbroken sigh.

Boxey ran across the room. "Father? What's wrong?"

Startled, Apollo looked up, then set down the piece of paper and pulled his son into his arms -- Serina's son. "Boxey, you should be asleep."

Was he imagining things, or was that a tear on Father's cheek? "What's wrong?" he repeated.

Apollo managed a smile. "Nothing, Boxey. What makes you think so? You should be in bed." The silvery thing in his hand fell free against his bare chest. "That's where I'm going, anyway. Care to join me?"

Boxey got a glimpse of the piece of paper as Apollo carried him back to bed. It was a picture, taken on Carillon, of Apollo, Serina, and Boxey.

* * * * *

Boxey skipped school the next day, deliberately missing the shuttle to the school ship. He spent most of the day wandering the GALACTICA. Something was bothering his father. He promised his mother he'd take care of Apollo. Now, he had to do something. His father was sad about something. Was it because Mommy was gone?

Well, then, it was his responsibility to do something. But what would make Daddy feel good again? What made Uncle Starbuck feel good? A trip to the RISING STAR with Cassiopeia always seemed to help. Maybe he could get Starbuck to take Father gambling...

But Father didn't care much for gambling. Well, maybe Sheba...

But Father'd known Sheba for a long time, and Boxey knew it wasn't the same as Starbuck and Cassiopeia, or Starbuck and Aunt Athena. He'd have to find another girl.

That stumped Boxey for a while. He didn't know any other girls, none his father's age, anyway, that Father didn't already know. Besides, how does a little kid ask a grown woman to go out with his father?

"I know!" he exclaimed suddenly, stopping in the corridor.

Muffey, who'd followed him all day, whined questioningly.

"Cassiopeia will help!" Boxey ran to Life Centre as fast as his little legs could carry him, Muffey barking furiously behind him.

* * * * *

Cassie had to smile at the eager young face before her. "You want me to find a friend for your father?"

Boxey nodded enthusiastically. "Somebody who can be a special friend for him, like you are for Starbuck!"

She did a double-take. "A special friend? And what do I do when I find a special friend for him?"

"Well, they have to meet somewhere."

It was hard not to laugh. "True."

"And Father might get angry if he knows I'm doing this, so it has to look like an accident."

Cassie nodded at the small boy, an understanding smile on her lips. "Also true. Hmmm. Well, I'll see what I can do. I can probably convince Starbuck to help with the 'accidental meeting,' as long as he doesn't know what we're planning. He'd just give it away. Okay, Boxey, you leave it all in my hands. I'll fix it. You just try not to let your father get suspicious."

"Great!" Boxey gave her a magnificent hug. "I knew you'd help me! I gotta go! 'Bye!"

Cassie smiled and shook her head as the boy and his daggit dashed out of Life Centre. What was that child thinking of, anyway? But it couldn't hurt, this once, anyway, and Apollo might be better off with a little diversion. Starbuck kept complaining the Captain was preoccupied these days. If nothing else, he might be amused by Boxey's clumsy attempt at match-making. But who to ask?

Cassie's smile widened. She had a friend who could use a little diversion, too.

* * * * *

"Oh, Starbuck..."

"Don't 'oh, Starbuck' me, Cassie. Do you really think an evening on the RISING STAR is going to help Apollo? You don't know him as well as I do."

"It can't hurt!" she insisted. "And a pleasant evening with friends might help. You said yourself he's been moping lately. How can it hurt?" The pouting smile, and the gentle hand stroking his shoulder, brought other things to Starbuck's mind, but Cassiopeia refused to be distracted from Boxey's plot. She drew away when he tried to pull her into an embrace.

"Cassie, I don't know what's gotten into you tonight," he said in exasperation.

"I'd think you'd be concerned when your best friend isn't happy, and want to do something about it!"

"I am concerned, but I'm not too sure this is the way to deal with it. Apollo isn't easy to talk out of anything, and I'm not sure I could even convince him to come along. I think he's been arguing with Sheba, too, so that'd be no help..."

"Please, Starbuck?"

"Why are you suddenly so concerned about Apollo?" he teased, trying a new tack. "Do I have something to worry about?"

"It'd serve you right!" she retorted.

He laughed. "All right, Cassie, you win. I'll try to get Apollo to join us. But your eyes better stay on me!"

She grinned back and snuggled closer. "Oh, I can promise you that..."

* * * * *

"Say, Apollo, why don't you join the rest of us on the RISING STAR? Cassie and I are heading over in a few centars. We're off watch tomorrow, you know."

Apollo looked up at Starbuck distractedly, then finished replacing his helmet. The patrol had been uneventful, but he had other things on his mind. "Why?"

"Well, since Cassie's so intent on making it a party, I've invited most of the squadron, and the shuttle will be full of Warriors. I think you'll like it. I'm sure we can find something to celebrate."

Starbuck was the picture of innocence. Apollo was suspicious, then decided to give in. If he was going to stand there and pester him all day, resistance was useless, anyway. Any excuse for a party would satisfy Starbuck...

"All right, all right!" Apollo shook his head, but smiled. "If you're willing to wait for me to finish some bureaucratic paperwork, I'll join you."

Remembering Cassie's promises for the evening, Starbuck asked, "How long?"

"About a centar? I'm almost done."

"Sure." A centar wouldn't make much difference. "I'll stop by on the way to the shuttle, just to make sure you don't forget, or try to back out on us, Captain." With a smirk, Starbuck dashed off. He had to change clothes for the party, and there were still a few more people to invite to the RISING STAR. If anything could shake Apollo out of his doldrums, this party would be it!

A centar later, on the dot, Starbuck showed up at Apollo's door. "Ready, Captain?" he asked, sailing breezily in, then jumping to attention at the murderous expression threatening him.

"No!"

"Uh, mind if I ask why?"

Apollo nearly threw the handful of computer printouts he was holding, then pointed at more of the same littering his desk. "This stuff should only have taken me half a centar. But somebody got at it. Everything's out of order, missing, messed up, or lost. I'll be at this all night! You may as well go without me."

Apollo was on the verge of a temper explosion, and Starbuck wasn't about to argue. Better to get out while he still could. "Uh, okay. Anything I can do to help?"

"No!"

Starbuck beat a hasty retreat. Apollo sighed and slumped back in his chair. Whoever in Hades messed up this business had better not ever become known to him.

* * * * *

Two women sat quietly in one of the lounges aboard the RISING STAR, waiting for their companions. They were about the same height. One was blonde, with blue eyes, in a blue gown. The other had black hair, long and wavy. Her eyes were a stormy violet, and her gown was as red as the flower tucked behind one ear. They were old friends, and had both been socialators before the Destruction. Cassiopeia was now a med tech on the GALACTICA; Medea had turned her talents to working with children as a psych tech. Cassie's touch healed bodies; Medea's healed minds. Such were the talents of a socialator.

The blonde glanced at the door. "I wonder what's keeping them?"

Medea squirmed in her chair. "Are you sure this'll work out, Cassie? What if Apollo doesn't care to spend the evening with an ex-socialator?"

"Relax. You'll have a wonderful time. He's a gentleman. He needs some relaxation, anyway. He's been spending too much time at work, so Starbuck tells me. It's not healthy. You, of all people, should know that." Cassie's smile was encouraging.

Medea smiled back and took several deep breaths. "Well, if I can't draw his mind to other subjects, I don't deserve my designation!"

They both giggled. A sound in the corridor caught their attention, and Starbuck entered with a flourish, in clothes that were definitely not regulation.

"Greetings, fair enchantresses," he said with a courtly bow. "Have I kept you long?"

"Where did you get those clothes?" Cassie asked, wide-eyed.

Starbuck merely shrugged, accenting his shoulders very nicely. "A little something I've had for yahrens." He was already in very good spirits.

"Okay," Cassiopeia replied, still smiling. "This is Medea, an old friend of mine. Medea, this is Starbuck." Medea smiled a greeting. "But where's Apollo?" Cassie continued, a crease in her forehead.

"Alas, he was detained by a quantity of paperwork, and he nearly threw me out when I asked him to accompany me," he replied with a gallant gesture.

Medea and Cassiopeia exchanged disappointed glances. There went the purpose of the evening! Starbuck's bright eyes caught the look, and he quickly summed up the hints.

"I see!" he exclaimed. "This evening was really for Apollo's benefit! I'm sorry, Cassie. If you'd told me, I'd've found a way to get him here, even if it had to be at laser-point!"

"Well," she sighed, "can't be helped now. Sorry I got you here for nothing, Medea."

"What do you mean, for nothing?" Starbuck demanded. "Do you think a man such as I would permit a charming damsel to be robbed of a pleasant evening? You must join us, Medea. Most of Blue Squadron is here, and there's not a better group of people anywhere."

Cassie's eyebrows lifted. "Oh?"

Medea laughed outright, the lantern catching sparks from her eyes. If Cassie weren't here...

"I'll be the envy of every man here," Starbuck continued, flattering and cajoling.

"You'll be catching more than male eyes with us on your arms," Medea shot back. "And I'm sure you'll get your share of stares in those clothes."

"That's the general idea," he laughed. "Come then, my darlings, the party waits."

Several centons later, Starbuck reached the main gaming chancery of the RISING STAR, Cassie on his right arm, Medea on his left, catching stares from everybody, especially Blue Squadron, who called to them to join the party.

Melantha stifled a laugh as she caught Boomer's arm. Boomer stared, but couldn't restrain his laughter.

Starbuck raised an eyebrow. "Something on your mind, old buddy?"

"You've still got those old clothes, huh?" Back at the Academy, Starbuck once passed himself off as a professional wagerer in those tight-fitting clothes. Boomer turned back to the young black woman who was Jolly's wingmate. She'd been in on the joke at the Academy, too. "Melantha, I've got an idea."

"And what might that be?" she asked in a sultry voice totally unlike her normal tone. Starbuck grinned.

Boomer drooped over the nearest table. "Dresh uniform's great f'r p'rade, but not f'r parties. Lesh go back home an' get outta thesh cleshes an' inna sumfin lesh preshenable."

"I could be convinced," she cooed back.

"Will you be back?" Starbuck asked innocently.

"Maybe, maybe not," Boomer replied, straightening again. Melantha laughed, and the two disappeared.

"Where are they going?" asked a curious Jolly, returning to the table with a drink.

"Oh, hi, Jolly. You know Cassie, and this is Medea, a friend of the Squadron. Medea, this is Lieutenant Jolly."

Violet eyes met brown ones and locked in surprise, then blinked. Neither of them ever heard Starbuck's explanation of what was happening, and of the old story.

"You know, Starbuck, I could use a good luck piece tonight," Jolly cut in. "Could you relinquish the lady? I promise to take good care of her."

Medea instantly disengaged from Starbuck and linked her arm through Jolly's. "See you later, Cassie."

The pair wandered off, eyes completely on each other. Starbuck and Cassiopeia watched.

"Well, how do you like that?" Starbuck drawled.

Cassiopeia smiled fondly. "Looks like Medea will have a nice evening in spite of Apollo's no-show. Now, Starbuck, what's the first order of business for a party?"

He caught the hint. "Let's get a drink."

* * * * *

Apollo tip-toed into the room, stepping lightly over Muffey's mechanical form. The daggit growled a low sound of welcome. The man stooped over the bed, tucking the blanket a little closer, then kissed Boxey's forehead. He was turning back to the door when a sleepy voice spoke up.

"Father?"

"Yes, it's me, Boxey," Apollo whispered. "You should be asleep."

"You should be at the party!"

Apollo shrugged and knelt by the bed. "I had some things to finish, and they took longer than I expected."

"But I finished them for you! You should've gone! What's Medea going to do by herself?"

"You... You finished...? You messed up my papers? Do you know, it took me three centars to fix what should only have taken thirty centons?" Apollo had gotten over his earlier anger. He was too tired to be mad.

"But I did it so you'd be free to go and meet Cassie's friends!" the boy lamented.

With a sigh, Apollo set a folder on the bed and pulled his son close. "Oh, Boxey, why?"

"You've been so sad, and Mommy made me promise to take care of you. She's not happy when you're sad."

Apollo was touched. "Boxey, I love you. I'll try to be more cheerful, if that's what you want. I'm sorry, I didn't know I was making you sad, too." He smiled through a mist of tears and tired eyes.

"I love you, Father." Boxey's arms wouldn't release him.

After a few centons, Apollo spoke again. "Boxey?"

The boy sniffed, but looked at him. Apollo wiped away the tears on his son's cheeks, then stroked his hair gently.

"Son, you know I'm a Warrior. Your mother was a Warrior, too, and a very special person. Some day, I may have to leave you like she did, but I don't want you to feel sad for too long. You're still young, so very young... Boxey, there are some things I want you to have, when you're old enough. The Commander knows what they are, and if I'm not here, he'll give them to you."

Boxey's convulsive hug stopped his breath for a moment. Then Apollo gently set the boy back on his bed.

"Don't leave me, Father! I couldn't stand it! Please don't leave me, Father!" Boxey begged tearfully.

"I don't want to, Boxey. But some day, I may have to. You'll get the other things at the proper time, but there's something I want you to have now." Apollo pulled a small piece of paper from the folder at the foot of the bed. "Will you take this? And remember your mother and me always?" he asked quietly, his own heart breaking at his son's tears.

"Don't leave me, Father!" Boxey cried.

Apollo couldn't bear it. He grabbed the child again in a rib-hurting embrace. "Not if I can help it, Boxey. Not ever, if I can help it. Please, will you take this? And remember me?"

"I'll guard it always, Father. But don't leave me!"

"I don't want to."

"Stay with me. Promise you'll stay with me."

"All right, Boxey, I'll stay. But for now, you should get some sleep. Here, pull your blankets back again."

"Don't leave me tonight!"

Apollo couldn't. "All right. Let me take my clothes off." Boxey's eyes never left him as he set the folder aside again and pulled off his shirt. The boy's sniffing quieted as Apollo snuggled next to him in a bed not meant for a full-grown man.

The piece of paper lay on top of the folder. It was a picture, taken on Carillon, of a happy family -- Apollo, Serina, and Boxey.



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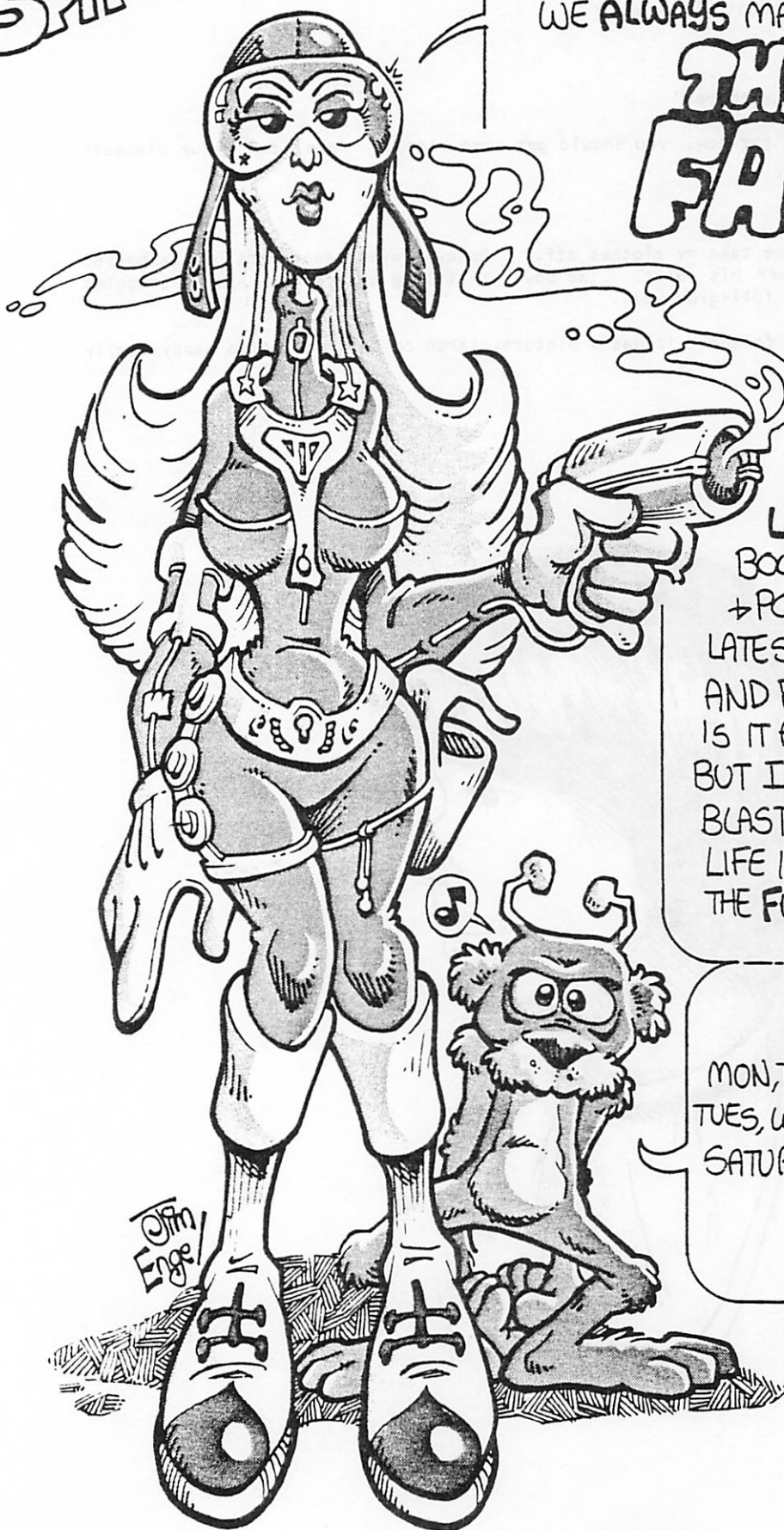
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An Exchange of Favors

Mary Jean Holmes

"An Exchange of Favours"

(By Mary Jean Holmes)

Well, it's finally happened. I knew it was coming the day I was rescued by this, uh, ship, but somehow, I never expected it would pose such a problem. To be truthful, I was certain I'd be long gone by now. I was sure the OSIRIS couldn't be too far from wherever Alix finally wound up, but thus far, I appear to be wrong.

The problem? Oh, yes. Of course, the first thing these people wanted to know about me -- once our communications improved, that is -- was just what I did for a living back where I came from. Since I really wanted to get at their navigation equipment (It must be in the blood; I never felt such an overpowering desire to get at anything mechanical or computerised before. Racial pride, it seems, compels me to show off how much better we are.), I told them I was a navigator, which was the truth. They seemed disappointed. Oh, well.

I couldn't disguise it forever, though. I am a compulsive musician; I whistle, hum, and sing to myself, often unconsciously. Alix once told me I sometimes sing in my sleep. He thought it was cute. I found it embarrassing. Anyway, they picked up on this quicker than they did any part of my language. So I was forced to tell them the truth -- yes, I did work as a musician, but I never really got anywhere much with it. Small-time performances, charity gigs, that was about it.

They didn't care. They were desperate for something new. Life on board a ship can get dreadfully boring, I know. So someone dug me up this...thing. I still don't know what it was. I think it was supposed to be a musical instrument, but it was either so badly out of tune or so unlike anything I was familiar with, I was never able to figure it out. Someone else gave me an electronic gizmo, but there was no way I was going to touch that. The humming and buzzing of circuits may seem like music to some people, but not to me.

Eventually, I managed to corner one of the Engineering people who sort of understood my version of their tongue, and got him to build me a real instrument, to my specs. Proper materials for the sounding box and neck were rather hard to come by, but that officer will never know what happened to his priceless wooden chest. Strings were tough to locate as well, but not nearly so. And when the whole mess was finally put together, it actually had a reasonable quality of sound. I didn't know what these people would call it -- they all looked at it kind of strangely, as though it might bite -- but sooner or later, I'll get them to say "guitar" properly.

Now, the big problem. I knew they wanted to hear music, the stuff from my home galaxy -- but what to sing? I wasn't about to give them a history lesson on the Empire and the Rebellion, nor was I about to give them such horrid goodies as "For the Glory of the Emperor" or even "Corellia, My Corellia." The words to those two often stick in my throat. I was tempted, however, to give them a few of the bawdier ballads, like "The Emperor's Daughter." That one, incidentally, is true, although the scandal involved in it managed to get it blacklisted as rebel propaganda.

Another problem was that, in order for my audience to understand me, I had to translate these things into their language. And truth to tell, it's hard making that conglomeration of sounds scan right while retaining the proper meaning.

Well, in any case, I was sitting in one of the ship's lounges one day, for lack of a better place to go, plinking away at my improvised guitar, when I noticed one of the pilots watching me with this intense look on her face. I'd seen her around before; her name's Mara, and she had a reputation for being a hotshot pilot in a Viper fighter -- just what I needed to remind me how far away from home I really was! I was singing a song in my own tongue, more to myself than for anyone else's benefit. I'm sure she didn't understand it; but when I finished and fell to aimless humming, she sidled a bit closer. For some reason, I had this feeling there was something she wanted to ask, so I decided to break the ice.

"Something you want to hear?" I asked in my best attempt at their language. "Not that I'd know it, of course, but I'm always willing to fake it."

She smiled, seeming more than a touch nervous. Maybe I'd made a mistake, and given her a proposition to go to bed or some such. Lords know I've made grand flubs like that before.

"No, not really," she said eventually. She watched my fingers wander from chord to chord in idle

progression. I began to wonder if these people considered this an obscene act. She wasn't the first one to stare at me so.

Then, unexpectedly, she asked, "Can you write music?"

That caught me off guard. I'd dabbled in tune-making and turned out a fair amount of original songs, but my skill at turning out good rhymes was always a bit under par. "Sometimes," I admitted. "No galactic hits, mind you, but they aren't too bad."

Mara's smile became a bit less nervous. She poked about in a belt pouch for a moment or two, then came up with a very worn bit of paper. From appearances, it was an old clipping, and had been fingered to the point of near-illegibility. "I found this poem a long time ago," she explained, holding it out for my examination. "I always thought it would make a beautiful song, but I could never find anyone willing to write music for it."

I looked the rhyme over. Well, from what I could tell, it scanned passably well, which was a point in its favour, and it wasn't terribly long. If I'd translated it right, the poem was a personal description of the author's feelings about flight, put forth in lovely, if somewhat florid, language. I read it over a few times, then shrugged. "Sure, I guess I could. It might take a while, though."

"I'd appreciate it," she said, meaning it. "I could never sing all that well, but I'd like to hear it, at least." She paused. "You wouldn't happen to be a voice coach, would you?" she asked, a trifle abashedly. "You've got a nice voice."

That, in my opinion, was a matter of debate, but something in my head went click! "Why? You want to take lessons?"

Mara glanced about to make certain no one was listening too closely. "If you wouldn't mind. I'm willing to pay, if the price isn't too steep."

That something went click! again. Damn mercenary instincts. I've considered having a complete transfusion done a couple of times. There are just too damn many dangerous hereditary things in this blood of mine. Oh, why couldn't I have taken after Mother?

"I've got no use for money, really," I replied, "especially not your kind. But I'll tell you what. You're a drill sergeant, aren't you? A flight instructor?"

Mara blinked. "Well, sort of. I've never really taught piloting, but I've had to pull a lot of cadets through their first few flights."

My head was practically spinning from all the busy thoughts racing around inside it. Alix never had the time to teach me actual piloting -- in spite of popular myths, my people aren't really born with the ability to pilot starships -- and I never had the inclination to learn, beyond the most rudimentary skills. But now that he was lost, floating around somewhere "out there," I found myself occasionally seized by the urge to take one of those fighter ships and look for him myself. They didn't seem in any great hurry to find him, and I was getting restless. If Mara could take me out during her routine patrols and show me the ropes... I grinned.

"Mara," I said, leaning conspiratorially toward the young woman, "I think we can work something out."

* * * * *

Things are coming along just fine for both of us. During her off-duty hours, I've been teaching Mara the tricks to proper singing, and she's snuck me out on a few of her patrol flights. I don't know if anyone else has figured out what we're up to yet -- Mara's terrified that any minute the Commander will find out and courtmartial her -- but after a few more hours at the controls, I should be able to fly one of these Vipers alone. Then maybe I'll finally be able to do something about finding Alix.

Meanwhile, I'll go on singing my bawdy songs that no one understands, except Mara. She's picked up a little of my language from spending so much time with me, and I translated some of these ditties into her tongue, for use in her lessons. So, while the others sit and smile stupidly and applaud my performances politely, she and I can have a good laugh over what my audience thinks are nice, gentle love songs.

Have they got a few things to learn!

Colonial Conclave

With the approval of the 1981 convention committee, a Colonial Conclave will be held as part of Windycon VIII.

The Conclave will be organized and run by OSIRIS Publications and "Purple and Orange?" -- the BATTLESTAR GALACTICA* fanzine. We will provide our own programming and hope to show BATTLESTAR GALACTICA* videotapes in our own small video room. At present, we are planning a costuming workshop, a seminar on the history of the Colonies, panels on writing/illustrating/editing BATTLESTAR GALACTICA* and other fan fiction, a Saturday-afternoon masquerade, and both trivia and poster caption contests.

Suggestions and volunteers for these and other activities are needed. Please contact us as soon as possible. Also, we need videocassettes and videocassette recorders. Again, please get in touch with us as soon as possible.

The Colonial Conclave will feature a BATTLESTAR GALACTICA* art exhibit, tentatively to be included in the Windycon Art Show, and artists are encouraged to bring and display all GALACTICA* and related work, whether for sale or not. This exhibit is, however, still in the planning stage and may be held in one of the Conclave's own rooms. Write to us this fall for further information.

There will be no special membership charge for the Colonial Conclave. However, we will have our own registration table and will issue special identification for Conclave attendees.

This year, Chicago's annual Windycon will be held at the Hyatt Regency Chicago on the weekend of December 18-20. Guest of honour will be Larry Niven.

Windycon VIII membership rates are \$10.00 before December 1 and \$15.00 thereafter and at the door. Room rates are \$38.00 for a single or double, \$43.00 for a triple, and \$48.00 for a quadruple room; rollaway beds are \$10.00 each. For dealers, a 6-foot table will cost \$20.00; the Conclave will not provide a separate Dealers' Room.

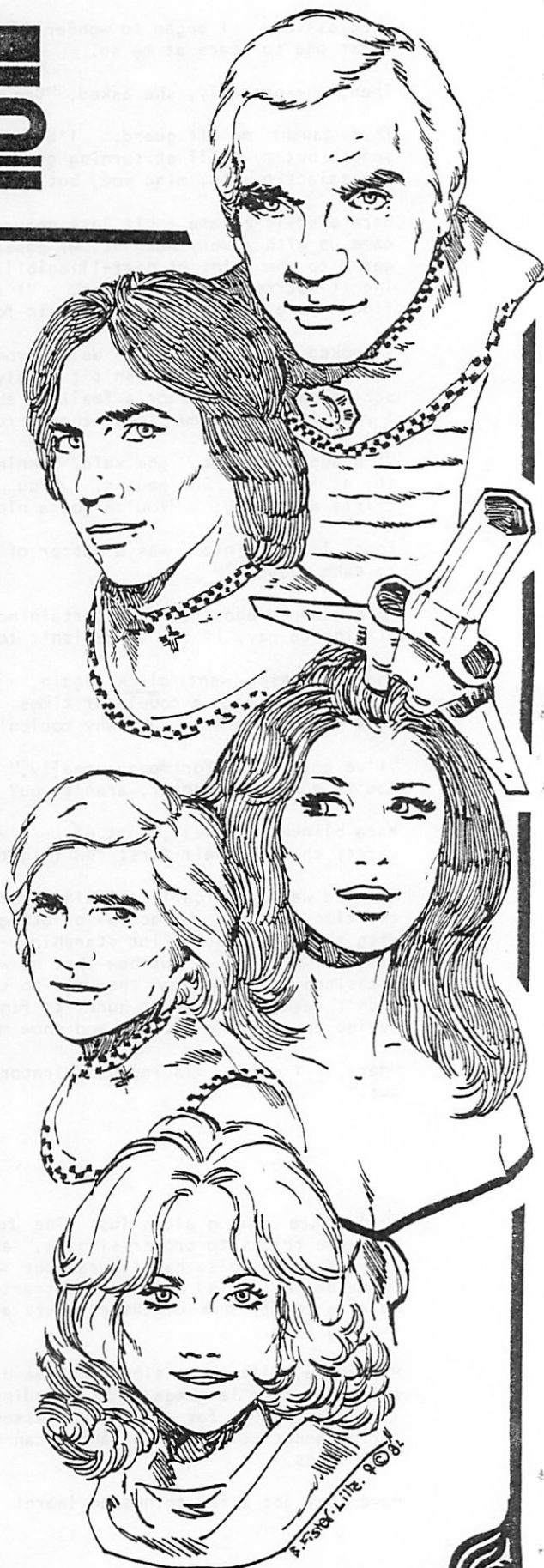
For convention memberships, dealers' tables, and all other Windycon VIII information, write to:

Windycon VIII
P. O. Box 2572
Chicago, Illinois 60690

For additional information on the Colonial Conclave, or to make suggestions and/or volunteer services, write to:

Colonial Conclave
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DELPHIAN

TALE



B. FINE LITE. 908.

(lee gaul)

"Delphian Tale"

(By Lee Gaul)

Colonel Kenji commanded the Delphian warcruiser DRAGONSBREATH and had done so since the Commander was killed mere sectars from Gamoray. Gamoray had been the capital of their empire. Now, the Cylons held it. There was nothing for the surviving displaced Delphians to do but run, and hope for refuge elsewhere.

They went to the human Colonies first, hoping to find aid in reclaiming their homeworld. They met only Cylons, who smashed their small fleet of escaped ships. The survivors scattered, hoping enough of them would escape to form a society elsewhere.

The DRAGONSBREATH had not encountered any other Delphians since that day, nor any Colonials. But she saw far too many Cylons. They were lucky.

Kenji was afraid their luck was running out. He had lost so many warriors, so many Sunrider fighters. He knew how to contact other Delphians, using a code hidden in his own subconscious, but the commanders of the surviving ships had agreed not to use the code unless they found a haven. None of them wished to summon others of their people to a deathwatch. Kenji felt the same. His ship would die alone.

That death might be soon. There was a large Cylon patrol on their trail. Kenji was unable to shake them, and he didn't dare risk sending his golden-winged fighters out, leaving the ship almost defenceless. They had little enough fuel left as it was. The Cylons gave them no rest. Soon, they would attack. And the DRAGONSBREATH would die.

He kept that knowledge from the women and children, the most precious of the cargoes they carried. It was better for them if they didn't have to expect death. Let them be content while there was time. Children of a rising sun, a golden sun -- and Kenji reflected it might also be a setting sun.

"Commander," said Mariko. He was the only commander they had.

"Yes?" Mariko was one of the few women in the Delphian military. She was also his wife.

"The Cylons are closing. Shall I alert our fighters?"

He nodded. It was as he expected. They had been forced to burn up fuel trying to escape, and now there was little left for any kind of prolonged battle. At least they would die gloriously.

"Mariko, Hito will take your place. Go to the children. They may be afraid."

It never occurred to Mariko to protest. He was her superior and her husband. She quietly left the bridge, and Hito took her place as scan officer.

"Squadrons ready for launch."

Kenji studied the launch tube scanners. So few ships left! From three full squadrons and part of a fourth, he had only enough ships for one squadron. Their chances looked slim.

"Launch fighters," he ordered quietly.

A terrible shock shook the entire ship.

"What was that?"

Hito ran a frantic check on every system he could. "Alpha landing bay, sir. A ship came through the lost corridor."

The lost corridor. He should have known. A scanner had been blasted in their last battle, and could only be checked by a double scan from another turret. Mariko would have seen it... But he couldn't blame Hito. So many systems needed major repairs after two yahrens alone...

"Launch the ships on Beta side. Can we land the other ships on Beta after the battle?" He was be-

ing optimistic.

"Affirmative."

"Then launch."

His squadron launched.

The battle was relatively brief. Surprisingly, the DRAGONSBREATH was victorious, with a minimum of casualties. They were, after all, the best the Empire had, to have survived this long on their own.

The DRAGONSBREATH herself did not fare so well. Alpha landing bay was completely demolished. Beta could only be approached from an oblique angle. One engine exploded into space, and they lost nearly all of their precious fuel. Several supply compartments depressurised. They had air leaks it would take days to repair.

They also had injuries. Their medical staff was good, but they lacked many supplies, and many of the injured were children, bruised and battered from the tumbling when the artificial gravity was temporarily lost. Several crewmen had severe burns and suffered near-asphyxiation trying to save their sole remaining engine. Fortunately, they succeeded.

It was nearly a day before repair crews were able to run thorough checks on many systems. They found their navigation computers burnt out. Several more scanners were gone. More cabins were depressurising. They were still losing air.

Studying damage reports, Kenji was near despair. For all practical purposes, his ship was now a drifting hulk, easy prey for the next Cylon who came along. If not Cylons, lack of supplies and the loss of air would begin claiming lives in a section. The DRAGONSBREATH was doomed.

At that moment, Hito reported one of the few operating scanners was picking up a ship, a big one -- a Colonial battlestar.

A battlestar? They might have hope yet.

* * * * *

"Colonel!"

Kleopatra was instantly at his side. "What is it, Tolan?"

"There's a ship on our long-range scan. It's not Cylon, and it's certainly not Colonial."

"Call Cain."

Kleopatra continued to study the strange configuration appearing on the screen. There was something familiar about it. On a hunch, she reached over and punched a classified code into the keyboard. The computer bank released the information she sought. The Colonel was right.

"What is it, Kleopatra?" Cain entered the bridge with his usual brisk stride.

"Ship on long range scan. It's Delphian."

She was a bit taken aback by the fiercely happy grin on her Commander's face.

"Sir, a signal! A Colonial recognition signal!"

"Acknowledge it, Memnon. At last, we're going to find out what happened to the Delphian Empire. I knew there had to be survivors in this quadrant!"

"So that's why we've stayed so close to Gamoray this long!"

"Right, Tolan."

In a few microns, a dark-haired, golden-skinned Delphian was on the com line.

"This is Commander Cain, of the battlestar PEGASUS."

"I am Colonel Kenji, in command of the DRAGONSBREATH. My ship is damaged. Can you assist us?"

The Delphians were said to be offshoots of humanity, but as a general rule they stayed clear of hu-

man territory, and once rejected an offer to join the Colonial alliance. They must be in serious trouble to request the assistance of a battlestar.

"Certainly. What's the problem?"

"Cylon attack. They destroyed our navigational equipment, and most of our supply areas are contaminated." The man looked uneasy. "We have women and children aboard, Commander Cain."

The Colonel didn't mention it, but Cain guessed most of their weaponry was gone as well.

"You're welcome here, Colonel. Can you transfer your people, or shall I send shuttles?"

"We have shuttles enough for our survivors. We will begin transfer at once."

Cain nodded sympathetically. "We'll be ready to receive you."

"Thank you, Commander. Kenji out."

The PEGASUS was quite near the DRAGONSBREATH by this time. The Delphian ship was in bad shape.

"It's hard to believe anything's alive on that wreck," Kleopatra commented. "Just look at the read-outs. Her launch bays are alright, but her landing bays are nearly gone. She's probably got air leaks, too."

"Memnon," Cain said, "get our med teams to the landing bays. They probably have wounded."

"Delphian shuttles approaching, sir," Tolan announced.

Cain headed for Alpha landing bay.

* * * * *

Shuttles carried the women and children, while the Delphian warriors flew their golden-winged fighters. There were large numbers of wounded among them, but Dr. Helena's teams were quick to help them, and they heard no complaints of pain. The Delphians seemed a quiet, almost stoic, people.

Colonel Kenji made sure his people were being cared for before he sought out Commander Cain.

The two men studied each other momentarily. Then Cain stretched out his hand. "Welcome aboard, Colonel."

"Thank you, Commander. We couldn't have lasted much longer without help."

"We're glad to help." The two men shook hands. "Come, we'll have more privacy in my quarters."

"Commander Cain," Kenji asked, as if he couldn't remain silent any longer, "how did the Cylons take the Colonies?"

Cain looked away for a moment. "They sued for peace. Our fleet flew into a trap, expecting to be greeted as peace envoys. There wasn't much left when they finished with us."

"Yet you are here."

"We weren't at the rendezvous. The PEGASUS was with the Fifth Fleet two yahrens before, when Molukai was attacked. The Cylons trapped us there, too, but we got out of it. The only place for us to run was deep space. We tried Gamoray, but the Cylons were there before us. How did they take the Empire?"

Now, the pain was in Kenji's eyes.

"Molukai was our ally. They attacked us shortly after it fell. We fought the Cylons every step of the way, from Molukai to the steps of the Imperial Palace on Gamoray. When Gamoray fell, and our rallying point was gone, we gathered what survivors we could. Other ships did the same, from every pocket of resistance left. Then we struck at the Cylons, breaking through their lines. Delphian ships ran in all directions, hoping some would make it to rebuild elsewhere. Several of us ran for the Colonies, hoping to find aid. But all we found was ambush and death. We separated and ran once more. The DRAGONSBREATH has been alone since then, over a yahren."

"And just now?"

"The Cylons found us again. You see the results. We destroyed them, but now we can't even run any more."

"But there are other ships out there? Still free and fighting?"

"Yes."

"Warships?"

"All Delphian ships are warships."

There was silence for several centons. Then, "You have supplies, personal effects you would like to bring with you?"

Kenji looked directly at Cain. "We brought many things with us, thinking we would need them on a new world."

"Then maybe you'd better supervise the transfer of those things to the PEGASUS. We may be able to use some of them, and there's still a new world ahead, somewhere."

"Where will my people go?"

"With the PEGASUS for now. I'm sure we can arrange something."

"What do you know of our customs, Commander?"

"Not a lot -- yet. That will change, I'm sure. We'll have to learn about each other, if we're all going to be stuck together on one ship."

"And that ship is yours."

"That's right, Colonel."

"There will be problems."

"I'm sure the Cylons will be sufficient cause to force us together at first. Later, we'll have learned enough to endure our differences."

"I hope so."

The transfer of items deemed useful or necessary began at once. In one day, those items in the livable areas of the DRAGONSBREATH were aboard the PEGASUS. It took several days more to send space-suited teams into the airless compartments. When everything had been transferred, the bodies of the dead were returned to the Delphian warcruiser, and the DRAGONSBREATH went to her glory in a single burst of Colonial fire.

The Delphians were practical. They never looked back.

The PEGASUS sailed on.



OSIRIS Publications has the following issues of the BATTLESTAR GALACTICA* fanzine "Purple and Orange?" available for purchase by mail:

- Issue #3 - Features the first installment of "Allies," the continuing story of the People, creators of the Cylons* (by a well-known fantasy author writing under the name John Jones IX). \$ 4.00 (52 pp)
- Issue #4 - Includes "The Celebration," the story of the origin of "purple and orange squadrons," and Part II of "Allies." \$ 6.00 (100 pp)
- Issue #5 - Introduces Sergeants Arion and Mara of the battlestar* OSIRIS, as well as more adventures of the crew of the GALACTICA.* Contains an account of a meeting between a Colonial Warrior and a survivor of the People, and Part III of "Allies." \$ 6.00 (96 pp)
- Issue #6 - Continues the introduction of the OSIRIS crew, with Lieutenant Trav and Sergeant Alexandra. Contains the sequel to "Neighbours" (Issue #5), "Dementia," and Part IV of "Allies." \$ 7.50 (128 pp)
- Issue #7 - Introduces Lieutenants Freya and Morgan, Sergeant Baleron, Gunnery Sergeant Jones of the OSIRIS, and Lieutenant Reisa of the GALACTICA,* as well as Commander Morpheus of the DEMENTIA. Includes a chance meeting with a demon in the dark; the conclusion of the "Neighbours" trilogy; Part V of "Allies," and much more. \$ 8.00 (152 pp)



"Apollo's Odyssey" - Tells what happened to Captain Apollo following the events chronicled in "The Hand of God," and why nearly everyone aboard the GALACTICA* believes him to be dead. \$ 7.50 (116 pp)

Issue #8 - Contains more GALACTICA, OSIRIS, and DEMENTIA stories, and introduces a new series of stories about the battlestar PEGASUS. Tells the identity of the father of Captain Laia's child; the deaths of both Colonel Lyra and Captain Apollo; Part VI of "Allies;" and more. 6/81 \$10.00 (104 pp)

Issue #9 - Introduces more of the OSIRIS and PEGASUS crews, continues the adventures of the GALACTICA and the DEMENTIA, and tells of the escape of Starbuck and Cy from the planet Starbuck. Includes Part VII of "Allies" and begins two new serials. 9/81 \$ 8.00

Issues #1 and #2 of "Purple and Orange?" are out of print as separate publications. A joint reprint of these introductory issues of the BATTLESTAR GALACTICA* fanzine is available for \$8.00. This reprint features the original Doug Rice cover from Issue #1 and contains both "The Last Episode" and "Cylons Is Golden," made famous by Chicago's Moebius Theatre.

Checks must be payable to Joy Harrison. Any checks made out to OSIRIS Publications or "Purple and Orange?" cannot be accepted. We do not accept stamps or credit cards. We will not accept telephone orders or collect telephone calls.

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WHY DID IT HAVE TO BE...?

BY:

H. RAVENWOOD



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At the request of H. Ravenwood, the editors of "Purple and Orange?" print the following dedication:

This story is dedicated to George, Steven, Philip, Lawrence, and Harrison, who provided the inspiration for it. Without them, this epic tale of adventure could not exist.

"Why Did It Have to Be...?"

(By H. Ravenwood)

The OSIRIS survey team crouched in the shadows of a rocky overhang, sheltering from the fierce sun. The place was dry, sandy, and hot, reminiscent in many ways of mythical Hades. But scanners aboard the OSIRIS indicated the remains of what was once a thriving civilisation, and the team had to check it out.

Tanis pushed back his hat and wiped his face with his sleeve. He could remember worse places -- but he'd have to try extremely hard. Moments like this made him sincerely wonder why he'd ever wanted to become a sentilologist, particularly one specialising in dead cultures. Because this one certainly was dead. In fact, aside from the survey team, about the only thing moving here was the sand.

Of course, there was life on the planet. The team just hadn't seen much sign of it yet. But there were even places where the sand seemed alive. That dune over there, for instance. There was no wind, but the sand seemed to move, as if it were composed, not of silicates, but of living organisms. Like...

He shuddered and pushed the thought aside. Places like this...

Resolutely, he got to his feet, shifted his pack to a more comfortable position, and signalled the team to move on.

Seven men and six women followed Tanis across the sand. Eight of them wore uniforms -- Colonial Warriors who were either part of the survey teams or had been assigned as escorts. All of them carried weapons, laser pistols and daggers. They could defend themselves if they had to, but there seemed to be nothing to defend against. No one had yet seen anything larger or more menacing than a few small, shy lizards. Just sand, scrub, and more...

More out of curiosity than any real necessity, Tanis led the others toward the strangely moving dune. Sand shouldn't shift without wind, unless there was something under...

No! There was nothing under the sand. It wasn't even sand. It was...

Even before his mind could form the words, Tanis reacted, drawing his laser and burning the slithering, writhing creatures that formed the "dune." He wasn't alone in his reaction. Fourteen men and women soon reduced the mass of snakes to a smouldering mound. Tanis quickly led them away.

As the survey team trudged along -- why did the shuttle have to land so far from their research site? -- the sandy terrain gradually gave way to rocks, boulders, and stunted-looking vegetation. Tanis seemed oblivious to the change -- oblivious, in fact, to everything around him, as indifferent as if this were a green and pleasant park on Caprica. But despite his apparent swagger, his eyes missed nothing. He led the team unerringly along an almost invisible trail, following a map that existed only in his head, a course laid out in his mind from information on the OSIRIS scanner tapes.

Suddenly, he stopped and, signalling the others to wait, scrambled up the sand-covered boulders to the right of their path. He lay flat at the top, studying what lay spread out before him. Then he gestured to the others.

"What is it, Tanis?" Captain Diana, military commander of the survey team, called up to him as she climbed to his side.

"The 'city' our scanners spotted, or what's left of it."

"Where?"

"Down among those trees, the fallen rocks. Look, you can see traces of carving there." He pointed toward a jumble of stone. "We're going to need a lot of time, a lot of men -- and one Hades of a lot more equipment than we can carry in here ourselves."

"I'll see what I can arrange. But you know the Commander doesn't want to fly anything in closer than our landing site. There's too much risk of it being seen by native sapients."

"Yeah, I know. Except there's nothing around to see us." He looked back at the ruins. "Warriors," he muttered under his breath. Then, "Well, let's get to work."

The ruined city lay in a ravine just beyond the boulders. By the time the survey camp was set up on the edge of the ruins, the sky was beginning to darken; the city itself was shrouded in gloom. Exploration would have to wait until morning. Despite protests from Tanis, who thought it unnecessary, Diana assigned Lieutenant Morgan and Sergeant Wilson to the first guard shift.

The other members of the team gathered in the central shelter, where they ate a hasty meal and began planning the following morning's work. Sergeants Bors and Tirus, who had no scientific specialties or interests, out of boredom started a desultory pyramid game. The sentiological study began to take shape.

Restless and impatient, Tanis soon left the shelter. Eager to get to work, hating to wait, he wandered aimlessly for a while, then found himself an isolated rock and flopped down beside it. Idly, he picked up a handful of sand and powdered rock, sifting it through his fingers.

"Mind some company?"

He shrugged indifferently.

"You don't like Warriors very much, do you?" Freya asked, sitting down beside him.

"I never said that."

"You don't have to."

"Look, Lieutenant, I don't much like the idea of shooting first, then trying to get the bodies to answer questions. And I don't much like people who do."

Freya nodded, taking him by surprise. "I agree." She noted his look of disbelief. "Not all Warriors like killing. In fact, very few of us do, except killing Cylons. Of course, there are always exceptions, but I think most of us are Warriors only because someone has to be. Me, I'd rather..."

He never found out what she'd rather do; a slithering, rasping sound interrupted her. Tanis leapt to his feet, moving so rapidly she saw only a blur. There was a sharp "crack!" -- then silence for a moment, before the man began recoiling his twelve-foot whip, staring with something more than mere dislike at the serpentine body only inches from his boots. He felt a shiver of revulsion just looking at it.

"Shoot first, ask questions later?" Freya said flatly.

"I hate snakes!" he snapped, nearly spitting out the words.

She let the matter drop. His "hatred," if that's what it was, was obvious. But his speed impressed her. "I've never seen anyone move so fast before," she remarked. "You're pretty good with that whip."

"Practice." He didn't want to talk.

Freya could take a hint. She shrugged, got to her feet, and walked away.

Alone, Tanis swore silently. Frak! Just when you think things are as bad as they can possibly get, they get worse. A place like this, an archaeological wonder -- and him stuck with a bunch of trigger-happy Warriors. And now, snakes. Why in Hades did it have to be...?

The air suddenly seemed colder, the night darker. Tanis got to his feet and hurried back to the relative security of the shelter.

Sunrise found the scientists already at work. Sergeant Wilson of Planet Survey and Lieutenant Gregory of Biosurvey were out gathering specimens for analysis. Captain Diana and Lieutenant Morgan, both of Astrosurvey, were preparing experiments to study radiation flux and atmospheric phenomena. The two Warriors and six civilians of Cultural Survey, led by Tanis as chief archaeologist,



were carefully beginning their study of the city, cataloguing the carvings scattered among the rocks, measuring the positions of stones and trees, and preparing to begin actual excavation.

Some distance from the others, deeper in the ruins, Tanis crouched over what was evidently a fragment of a carved pillar. With meticulous care, he brushed sand and dirt from the deeply incised patterns, then gently blew away the last of the dust. His fingers traced the design in the rock surface, lingering over the delicately curved lines. His attitude was almost reverent.

How long ago had these carvings been made? What nature of being lived here, worked here, died here? Once again, he felt the overwhelming sense of history that made the past -- any world's past -- so precious to him. To touch something that was ancient long before the exodus from Kobol -- and he was certain the city was at least that old -- to hold history in his hand...

He was no Archivist. A history told in words was static, dead. But this was once a living, vital place, and its history would be an on-going one as long as its remains survived. Even a fragment like this was enough to keep the city alive.

Weighing the piece of carving in his hand, Tanis looked across the ruined city, his mind trying to see it as it once must have been. We're just passing through history, he thought, seeing his companions. But this... This is history...

Shaking off the thought, he quickly catalogued the location of his find, got to his feet, and walked farther into the ruins. The presence of the Warriors was an irritant he wanted to avoid as much as possible.

As the day passed, Tanis worked farther and farther from the other members of his team. He liked the peace, the solitude, the feeling that he was alone with the city he was just beginning to explore. They would begin digging soon, uncovering the secrets of the city's past, the identity of its builders, the nature of its mysteries.

The other sentiologists had all worked with him before and respected his preference to work alone when first studying a new site. But Diana was troubled as the archaeologist penetrated deeper into the ruins. They'd already encountered potentially dangerous life forms -- Lords, that mound of snakes! -- and who knew what surprises the city might hold?

"Freya, keep an eye on him," she ordered, gesturing at Tanis, just visible among the tangled jumble of rocks and vegetation.

"He won't appreciate it."

"Be discreet. Just be within range if he gets in any trouble."

Freya nodded. She managed to manoeuvre herself near to Tanis over the next few centons.

There was no trouble for over a centar. Then Tanis, bent over a fallen pillar twined with pictographs, suddenly had the feeling he was being observed. Still apparently engrossed in the architectural artifact, he shifted position to give himself a better view of his surroundings. Nothing. The prickling sensation persisted. Something or someone was watching him.

The archaeologist rose casually and wiped the sweat from his forehead. He wondered if anyone else on the team had observed anything strange. Just a short distance away through the maze of stone and vegetation was one of the female Warriors -- Freya, her name was. She seemed unconcerned about any trouble. Maybe he was imagining things. But he doubted it.

Still casually, as if merely preparing to move to another place in the ruins, Tanis sauntered across the broken stone-paved square, easily climbing over stone blocks. Some crumbled under his touch, and although most still seemed solid, he moved more carefully.

Standing atop a pile of rubble, Tanis wiped his brow again, shading his eyes from the bright sun as he briefly scanned the area. Freya was still the only person in his line of vision. He turned his gaze in another direction.

What in the name of...? Tanis frowned, squinting as he tried to force the distant object into clear focus. There was something over there, just beyond his sight... Damn, he just couldn't make it out!

Well, maybe some of the others had noticed something unusual. After lunch, they'd investigate that distant whatever on the horizon.

Still considering what might have caused his inner alarm to sound so strongly, Tanis clambered down

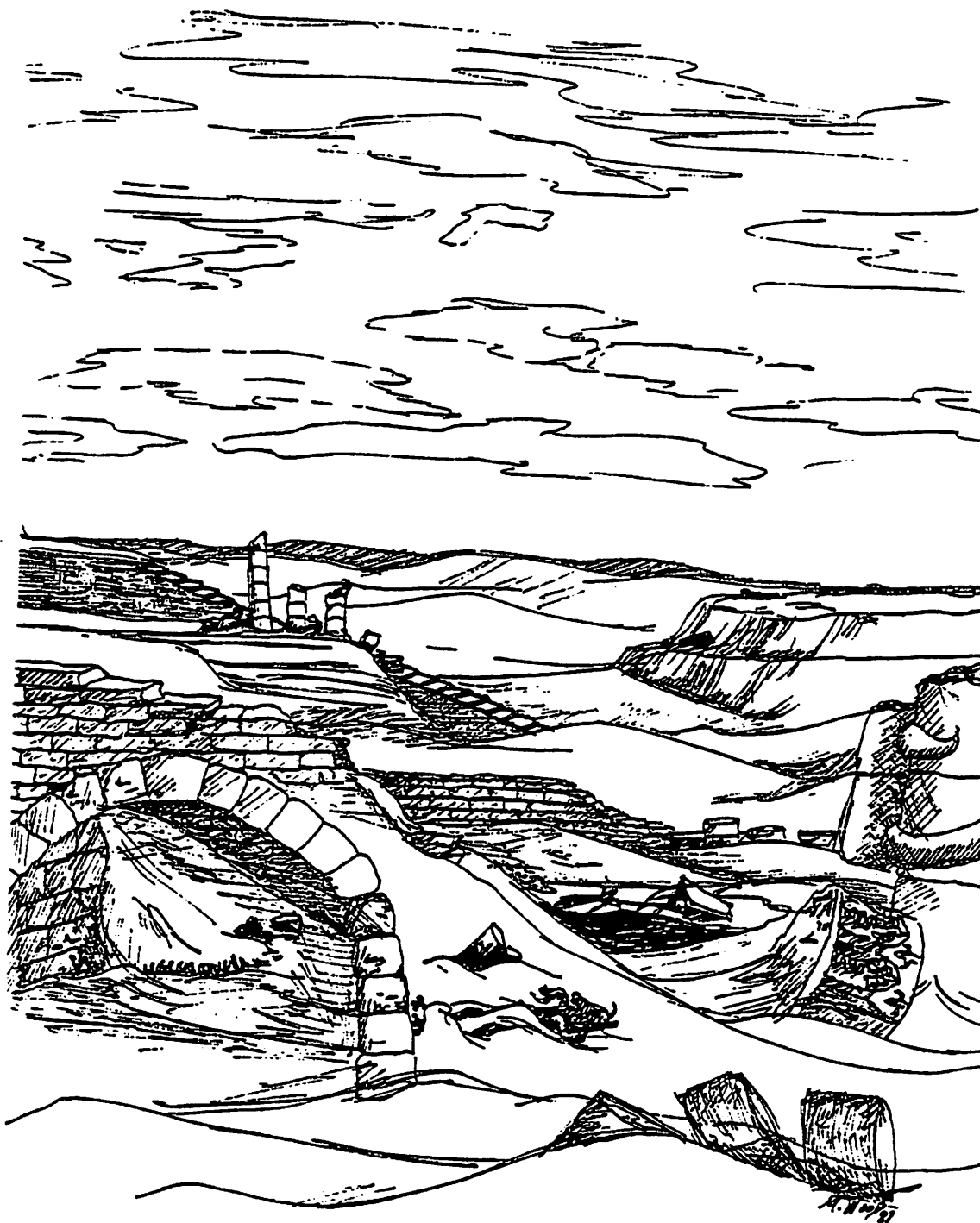
from his vantage point. Something about this place was very disturbing...

Just as he settled his weight on a dusty block of stone, he knew he shouldn't have. The stone gave way, falling away into some Stygian darkness. Tanis jerked his foot back and grabbed at a nearby pillar, struggling for balance on the edge of blackness. He'd almost pulled himself to safety when the pillar he gripped so tightly crumbled, and the block he stood on joined its mate in the underground.

Tanis fell, grunting in self-disgust at his carelessness in not noticing...

A centon later, a horrified scream echoed madly from the newly-exposed pit.

(To be continued.)



DEATH SCENE

(anonymous)



"Death Scene"

(Anonymous)

Dead silence. The sun shone brightly, hotly on the desert. The heat shimmered in low waves on the dull-coloured rock and dust. There seemed no life anywhere.

A lone figure waited tensely under a low rock overhang. The dark-haired woman held a laser ready. Her blue eyes constantly scanned the dry terrain, searching for the friends who had been gone so long. Her anxious stare was suddenly drawn to another figure, slipping from rocky shelter to rocky shelter, bent low.

Her hand tightened on the weapon.

Then the man was beside her in the small shelter, gasping in the thin, dry air. "Apollo! Thank the Lords you're back! But what about the others?" Surely the Cylons hadn't gotten everybody!

Apollo shook his head, taking a moment to catch his breath before answering. "No, the Cylons hadn't gotten anyone when we split up. But they saw us, and they were close. I don't know how the others fared." He answered her unasked question.

"Do you think they'll be back soon?"

"As soon as they lose the Cylons, they plan to come here."

Brother and sister were silent. Athena kept watch while Apollo rested from the strenuous centar's flight.

Six Colonial Warriors came to this world to investigate what appeared to be an abandoned base on a dead planet. They discovered it wasn't abandoned when Cylons shot down one of their Vipers. The cadet died. The others slipped below Cylon scanners and landed on the planet. A hasty council decided to try to spy out the Cylon base, learn its strength, and get that knowledge back to the GALACTICA before the Fleet passed through this quadrant.

Athena stayed behind to guard their Vipers, hidden in a small cleft valley in the rocky area. The others -- Apollo, Starbuck, Boomer, and Sheba -- slipped into the Cylon base.

"What did you find out?" Athena asked quietly. Better not to worry about the missing Warriors.

"Small base. Looks like the Cylons are just a scouting group, too. But I think they're planning on manning a full-strength garrison here. We're not getting past them any too soon. A few more seconds, and we might've had trouble."

"Have they got enough fire power to attack the Fleet?"

"Not enough. Besides, they don't have the long-range scanners to pick us up yet."

"How'd you find that out?"

"Sheba slipped into their command centre."

"So we should be able to get past them?"

"Hopefully."

Athena sighed with relief. She'd been afraid there was a full garrison here, that the Fleet would be running into an ambush. Now, it appeared that, even if none of them got back, the Fleet would be able to escape.

"I just wish they hadn't seen us," Apollo continued.

"How'd it happen?"

"We found out everything we needed to know, and we were trying to sneak out the same way we got in,

but there was a Cylon sentry we didn't spot the first time. They were ready for us. We had to split up to try and lose them."

"What are our chances?"

"I think they're pretty good. Our battlesuits match the terrain pretty much, and this place is at least as hot as human body temperature. It's just a matter of staying low."

They waited in silence. Long centons passed. Apollo took up watch at the opposite end of the overhang.

There was a sound, out of range of Athena's sight. Both Warriors were ready at once, lasers pointed unwaveringly.

Two figures, stooped low, appeared between the rocks, keeping an eye behind them.

"Boomer and Sheba!" Apollo exclaimed in relief, lowering his weapon.

Then laser fire cut across the ground in front of them, and the newcomers had to dodge enemy fire to skid to a dusty stop under the rocks. Dust spurted, and rock chipped all around them.

"What the frak!" Boomer swore.

"But we lost them! I know we did!" Sheba insisted breathlessly.

"Well, they found us somehow. Maybe they were looking for me," said Apollo. "We're pinned down."

"And Starbuck's still out there! What if they get him?" Athena whispered.

"There's nothing we can do. We've got to get ourselves out of here," Apollo replied quietly. His voice was determined, but Athena saw the anxious set to his shoulders, fear for a friend, knowledge that they couldn't risk their lives searching for him.

"He could run into them!" Boomer insisted. "If we see him, we can at least warn him!"

"And warn the Cylons as well? Not a word! Maybe they'll lose us again."

"What if they don't?"

"We've got four lasers. Sell yourselves as high as you can."

"That won't get our information back to the Fleet," Sheba pointed out.

"I know," Apollo replied. He thought for a moment. "We'll have to split up again. If three of us provide a diversion, maybe one can escape." He looked at their worried faces -- his sister, the woman who loved him, and one of his closest friends. It would not be an easy choice.

"Sheba."

Startled, Apollo stared at Athena. "What?"

"Sheba should go. You said yourself she was the one who got into their control centre. She knows the most about the base."

"Athena, no."

"She's right," Apollo cut in. "Sheba, you're the one. When I give the signal, be ready to run, and keep low. Go for your Viper. Make sure there aren't any Cylons waiting for you. If we get rid of this bunch, we'll catch up with you in space. That's an order, Lieutenant."

"What about Starbuck?"

"We can't afford to wait, knowing the Cylons are here and looking for us. If he makes it, great. If not... He's a Warrior, he knows his chances."

They understood the necessity. They nodded. A tear on Athena's cheek was the only sign of emotion.

A chunk of the overhang crumbled, spilling dust and rock chips on the group of Warriors.

"Must've weakened with the last laser burst," Boomer observed. "Captain, we better go."

"Get ready."

A figure appeared, rushing from behind a boulder. Athena's breath caught as Starbuck ran into view. "No!" she breathed.

The Cylons saw him, too.

Starbuck suddenly gave a half-scream and dropped to his knees, hands clutching at the open burn wound across his ribs. A second burst of laser fire cut deeper. He fell backwards and lay still in the dust. The clanking of a Cylon could be heard from among the rocks.

"Starbuck!" Apollo yelled, running from the shelter with no thought for his own safety. He ran to his friend's side, dropped down next to him, and cradled the still body in his arms.

Boomer and Sheba instantly took positions of guard, searching for the Cylons who'd just killed Starbuck. Murder glared from their tear-filled eyes.

Athena could only stare for a moment, frozen in horror. Then she, too, crept forward. "He can't be..."

Apollo looked up at her and nodded, grief drawing his face in lines of pain.

"No! No! You can't be dead! No, no... Oh, Dirk... Oh, damn!"

"Cut!"

A groan rose from the two men in Cylon armour, already shedding their helmets and wiping off sweat.

Maren stood up, arms akimbo, obviously annoyed with herself. "Sorry, gang."

The fallen Warrior twitched slightly.

Richard punched his shoulder. "C'mon, Dirk. We blew it."

"Can't," the blond man said. "I'm dead."

Herb and Anne chuckled. Richard looked disgusted. He rolled Dirk face-down into the dust and let him drop.

"Hey!" the "dead" man sputtered.

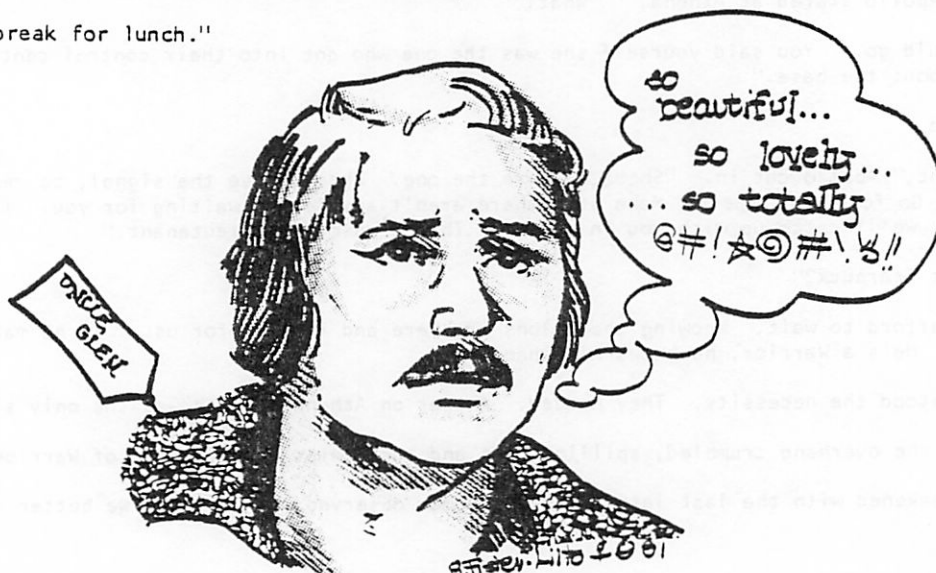
"Any chance we could leave him dead?" Anne asked.

"Fraid not," Richard replied. "Where's that 'ship of lights' when we really need it?"

The twitching, complaining form burst into laughter. Dirk reached up his arms and permitted Maren and Richard to drag him to his feet. He proceeded to brush the dirt from his uniform and face.

Larson checked his watch and sighed. Another morning gone, and they were still behind schedule in shooting this episode. Well, it couldn't be helped.

"Okay, crew, break for lunch."



SHADES OF THE PAST

by Sharon Monroe



"Shades of the Past"

(By Sharon Monroe)

"Try it now, Cy."

"The-communications-beam-still-does-not-receive-the-Colonial-frequency-Starbuck. I-think-you-ought to-let-me-attempt-to-repair-it."

Starbuck bumped his head and grimaced as he pulled out from under the console. "I know it's your ship and all, Cy, but I think I know more about this than you do. After all, I put you back together."

"It-is-no-wonder-I-do-not-function-as-efficiently-as-I-did-before-encountering-you."

"Just watch the scanners."

"Starbuck-scanners-are-picking-up-Colonial-Vipers-approaching-rapidly."

"Oh frak! See what you can do about that frequency, Cy! And hurry!"

"What-will-you-be-doing-while-I-repair-the-communications-instruments?"

"Trying to keep us out of the sights of those Vipers long enough to tell them we're friendly before they blow us out of the stars! They're not likely to appreciate a Cylon Raider coming at them. No offence intended."

"I-understand. Your-people-do-not-get-along-well-with-mine." Cy's metal body bent under the console, attempting to patch together a frequency to the Vipers.

* * * * *

"Single Cylon fighter, Captain. Do we pursue?"

"We pursue." Apollo eyed his scanner. "Diana, stick with me! Gregory, you and Alexandra flank right. Ariella, you and Mara flank left. Catch him in a crossfire. Go!"

No acknowledgements were necessary. The ships peeled off as ordered.

* * * * *

"Frak! They're flanking us! Hold on, Cy. This could be a very short ride."

"I-think-I-have-a-Colonial-frequency."

"Good! I'm gonna use it! Get your wires out of the way!"

Starbuck jiggled a switch. "This is Lieutenant Starbuck of the battlestar GALACTICA. Do you read me?"

* * * * *

The OSIRIS pilots nearly ripped their helmets from their heads at the sudden burst of static screeching in their ears.

"What was that?" Mara stammered out.

"I don't know, Sergeant. Careful if it comes again. May be a new weapon. Get him before he starts firing."

* * * * *

"Cy! We're receiving, but we can't send! Try again!"

One of the voices sounded familiar, but Starbuck didn't have time to analyse past memories. A burst of laser fire cut directly in front of him. He banked sharply left, nearly into another line of fire. Desperate hands ran across controls, and a desperate mind sent a plea and a promise to whatever gods there were.

Apollo! Apollo! The voice was Apollo's! Lords, he might be saved yet! If he wasn't already dead.

"Cy! Get out from under there! I'm gonna try something!"

"Why-do-humans-always-change-their-minds? Circuits-would-work-so-much-better."

"Shut up, Cy."

He touched delicate switches, sending the Raider's wings into movements meant for atmospheric manoeuvring. In space, the wings merely wagged up and down, unsteadily.

"Please remember, Apollo."

* * * * *

Apollo stared in disbelief at the wagging wings of the Raider. It was suddenly making little effort to avoid them.

"What in the...? Got you!" Alexandra's voice was confused, then triumphant.

"Cease fire!" Apollo shouted.

"What? Why?"

She swerved away, but one burst hit the Raider. As close as she was, she couldn't miss.

"Lords, no!" Apollo breathed.

* * * * *

Another familiar voice! Starbuck was sure he was dead. That woman couldn't be alive, could she? Suddenly, he realised where she was -- coming at him from behind. It was...

Sparks leapt from the console. With a single moan of disbelief, Starbuck fell, unconscious, to the deck.

"Starbuck? Are-you-incapacitated? It-appears-I-must-fly-the-ship. Humans-are-so-flimsy." Cy took the controls in hand, prepared to do what was necessary to keep them alive. He listened to the Colonial frequency.

* * * * *

Apollo's fingers were mentally crossed as the Raider shook in its path, then stabilised. He released his breath. "Attention, Cylon craft. Do you read me?"

* * * * *

What was a Cylon to do? He couldn't answer; he didn't have the frequency. He did the next best thing -- wagged his wings again.

* * * * *

"Starbuck, you... Look, if you can't communicate, just listen and obey. This is Captain Apollo. Fix on me. We're leading you back to base. Don't try anything. If necessary, we will destroy you."

Apollo's Viper turned back to the OSIRIS. Diana, alongside him, recognised the name Starbuck, and hoped for Apollo's sake this wasn't a trick. Gregory, Alexandra, Ariella, and Mara followed the Raider -- just in case.

* * * * *

Jones stared at the commlink. "What do you mean, we're bringing in a Cylon Raider and be ready for casualties? If it's a Raider, I know where the casualties are going to be!"

Shandar's voice was apologetic. "All I know is what the Commander tells me. It might be a friend."

"Might also be an enemy," Jones muttered, shaking his head. But he got a crash crew ready.

"What's going on? I've been hearing noises all the way to the celestial chamber."

Jones looked at Morgan. "Captain Apollo's bringing in a Cylon Raider. I think he's finally gone 'round the bend."

Morgan looked slightly taken aback, then turned his mind to other matters. A quick scan of the Cylon ship surprised him. There was a human aboard! He checked for damage. Hmmm, not so good. The fuel pods would probably explode the micron they contacted air. Well, Morgan could take care of that. He settled out of the way and turned his attention to keeping the ship intact.

Whoever was flying that ship managed a creditable job of bringing it in. Morgan's only problem was keeping the fuel tanks in one piece. The ship dropped gently onto the deck of Alpha Bay.

In an amazing display of formation, Apollo, Diana, and Alexandra brought their Vipers alongside in perfect landings. If anything unfriendly came out of that Raider, there would be three Warriors prepared to deal with it.

The Raider would have been surrounded by crewmen, but Apollo motioned everyone back. Only Morgan disobeyed the order, to stand close to Apollo and Diana. Alexandra and Jones held lasers ready on the other side.

After several centons, while tension built to almost unbearable levels, the ship finally opened, revealing a metallic form carrying what appeared to be a dead or unconscious human. The Cylon walked slowly down the short ramp.

Alexandra stared. A Cylon! On a battlestar! She ought to shoot it, destroy it, before it could do any damage. But it was carrying a human, carrying him gently and carefully!

"Captain Apollo?" she finally called, still holding her laser steady, aimed directly at the Cylon. Apollo, Diana, and Morgan were already on their way. Jones merely observed.

"You-are-a-Warrior?" the Cylon asked, striding toward her as she took a hesitant step back.

"Uh, yes," she stammered at last, when the Cylon showed no sign of going for a weapon.

"This-is-Starbuck. He-is-a-human. He-is-my-friend. He-is-in-need-of-medical-attention. Where-is-a-medical-facility?"

Alexandra thought she was going to faint.

At that centon, Apollo reached them. He stared. "Starbuck?" he whispered, still holding his laser.

"He... It says they're friends, and he needs a doctor." Alexandra's laser was wavering.

"How...?" Apollo seemed at a loss for words. Diana and Morgan stood silently.

"He-was-flying-the-ship-when-someone-hit-us-from-behind-with-laser-fire. Starbuck-was-injured."

Apollo hazarded a glance at Alexandra. She seemed in shock.

"Put him down, and stand back," he said.

The Cylon carefully deposited the unconscious Starbuck on the deck, then stepped back. "Will-you-destroy-me-now? I-told-Starbuck-his-people-would-not-be-happy-to-see-me."

Even Apollo was stunned. As Flight Commander, he knew he didn't dare lose sight of his responsibility. This was a Cylon! But calling Starbuck friend? Starbuck, after so long, to be back! To see his friend again! He drew a deep breath.

Alexandra knelt next to the unconscious body. "It really is," she murmured, pushing aside a loose lock of hair over his eyes.

Those eyes blinked suddenly and stared up at her, blank for a centon, then with recognition.

"Aley, it was you. You just can't stop coming after me, can you? Where's Cy? Cy? Where are you?"

"I-am-here-Starbuck."

"Good. Aley, see that my friend gets good treatment, will ya?" The question died away as his consciousness faded.

Alexandra looked up at Apollo and "Cy," the Cylon. "What do you think, Captain?"

Apollo was staring at the Cylon. "If anyone could do it, Starbuck could. Jones..."

But Jones was already gathering a medical team and preparing Starbuck for a trip to Life Centre. He shook his head. "Don't ask me to explain insanity, Captain." Then he was gone, and Starbuck with him.

Apollo's gaze went back to this "Cy" creature. "Who are you?" he asked abruptly.

"Starbuck-called-me-Cy. I-am-a-Cylon. We-are-friends. We-crashed-on-the-planet-Starbuck."

Apollo was bewildered. "Morgan," he finally said quietly, "get a Security detail. Take...Cy...to the detention area. We'll keep him there until Starbuck wakes up. If he does," he added.

In only a few centons, Major Assistì had a dozen Security personnel escorting the Cylon.

"I-told-Starbuck-his-people-would-not-trust-me. He-never-listens-to-me." The Cylon's gesture could only be interpreted as exasperation.

"Apollo," Diana asked, "what do you think?"

"I don't know. But it looks like Starbuck picked up a friend."

"What a friend!"

"Yeah."

* * * * *

Starbuck blinked back to consciousness. A balding, somewhat chubby face bent over him. "Yes, he does appear to be coming around. Hello, young man. Do you know how lucky you are?"

Starbuck managed a grin. "Yeah. Last time Aley shot me down, I was dead. Is she here?"

One eyebrow lifted, and the doctor looked beyond Starbuck's field of vision. "Sergeant? I think he wants to talk to you."

The doctor's face vanished, to be replaced by the face of a woman Starbuck hadn't seen in yahrens. Her peculiar expression was somewhere between a smile, a laugh, and tears. One lock of brown hair dropped over his nose until she pulled it back.

"Alexandra. I never thought I'd see you again in this life. I presume I'm still alive?"

"Quite, if the doctor knows his business, which he usually does. What are you doing here?"

"I don't know. I thought you'd tell me."

"I can tell you lots of things, if there's time."

"I'm sure I'd love to hear them, too. Let's start with where am I? This isn't the GALACTICA."

"No, it's the OSIRIS."

"The OSIRIS? That sounds familiar."

"I would hope so, Lieutenant!"

That voice! Starbuck nearly threw himself out of bed, not even noticing Alexandra's helping hand.

Dark hair, green eyes, a smile that wouldn't wait or be suppressed. Behind the man, a red-haired woman blinking to stop the tears in her eyes. Even Starbuck had lost hope that Apollo was alive, yet here he was, the same as always, smiling, glad to see him. Apollo, alive, and behind him, Diana. Starbuck's laugh caught in his throat.



Then Apollo's arms were around him, tight, and Diana's laugh sounded in his other ear as she joined the hug. Alexandra would have stepped discreetly aside, but somebody's free arm pulled her back. It was several very long centons before anyone pulled free or tried to make coherent conversation.

"I can't believe it! With everything that's happened, here you are! What happened, Apollo?" Starbuck's voice was nearly cracking.

Apollo's smile strained momentarily. "Never mind, now. Maybe I'll tell you later. What about you? You're looking good, but what happened to you?"

"I got stranded, found Cy, and eventually got a Cylon spacecraft ready to fly... By the way, where is he?"

"Who?"

"Cy. You didn't destroy him, did you? Apollo, I'll never forgive you if..."

"He's in the detention area. We didn't know what else to do with...Cy."

Starbuck relaxed. "You of all people should understand there can be common ground for us. After all, I did re-create him."

Apollo finally nodded his head. "If you're willing to vouch for him, I'll talk to the Commander. I guess we can let him out. But what'll we do with him?"

Starbuck shrugged. "We'll find a place."

Diana and Alexandra drifted away, giving the two men some privacy after yahrens apart. Diana's eyes were shining, happy to see an old friend again. She had an observant eye on Alexandra as well, to view her reaction. The Sergeant was controlling her emotions with a tight rein, but there was a certain anticipation evident in her.

"Where do I fit in?" Starbuck asked suddenly.

Apollo laughed. "There's always a place here for a competent Warrior. Though where that leaves you, I don't know."

Starbuck made a face.

"Well," Apollo continued, "we're still due on patrol. Hey, Morgan! See if you can get Starbuck set up and on the roster. Starbuck, we'll let you rest until Dr. Senbi says you're okay, but then you'll be part of the crew. By the way, this is Lieutenant Morgan. Morgan, I know you've heard us talk about Lieutenant Starbuck. See you both later."

Apollo grabbed Diana, and after a punch on Morgan's arm, was out the door.

"Hi, Morgan." Starbuck smiled at the green-eyed, blond Warrior. He was obviously a good friend of Apollo's and Diana's. Any friend of theirs was likely to be somebody he wanted to know. But Morgan's response was a sudden cooling, as his smile turned professional. Starbuck felt rebuffed. Wryly, he considered that Morgan was probably as private a person as Apollo and Diana, and it would take time to get to know him. Too bad.

Morgan, for his part, couldn't help drawing back, unintentional though it was. He didn't open easily to people, though it shouldn't take long to get to know this friend from the pasts of his two dearest friends. He tried to be more friendly.

"I'll have to check on accommodation status. As for squadron assignment, Captain Apollo is Flight Commander, so that's his responsibility. If the doctor will okay it, I'll take you around, introduce you to the Commander and the other officers."

Senbi's response was a wave of his hand. "Go ahead. A short walk will be good for him. But, Lieutenant, the micron you feel faint or unwell, you get back here. I'll expect you back anyway, within the centar."

Although the ship was very like the GALACTICA in form and layout, it was still foreign. Starbuck was glad to have Morgan lead the way.

Alexandra watched them leave without a sound. A parting wink from Starbuck showed she was not forgotten. There would be time to talk later.

There
are other things
lurking in the
Shadows

ShadowCon VI

THE GOTHIC HORROR GATHERING

From FRANKENSTEIN to DARK SHADOWS to ALIEN and beyond!

LA HYATT HOTEL at LAX
Los Angeles, California
JULY 2, 3 and 4, 1982

ROBERT BLOCH

Author of PSYCHO, FIREBUG, AMERICAN GOTHIC, and of the soon-to-be-released PSYCHO II!

ROGER DICKEN

Special Effects Creator for ALIEN, WAR LORDS OF ATLANTIS, SCARS OF DRACULA, and more!

DARK SHADOWS GUESTS and PROGRAMME

Special Gathering with DS Stars: LARA PARKER - JOHN KARLEN - JERRY LACY - ROBERT RODAN - DENNIS PATRICK - BARBARA CASON - MICHAEL STROKA - LISA RICHARDS - and Others! ALSO -- DS Episodes - HOUSE OF DARK SHADOWS - NIGHT OF DARK SHADOWS - Full Programming and More!

GRAPHIC GOTHICS Horror Comics Symposium

Featuring Top Comic Creators ROY THOMAS - SERGIO ARAGONES - GERRY CONWAY - DON GLUT - ALFREDO ALCALA

FILMS

Including BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN, HOUSE THAT DRIPPED BLOOD, THE RAVEN, THE LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE, FRANKENSTEIN, CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF, HAMMER FILMS and MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED!

VIDEO

Including ALIEN, LOVE AT FIRST BITE, PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE, THE NIGHT STALKER, YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN, Langella's DRACULA, TIME AFTER TIME, THE FOG, THE DEVILS, THE SHINING, THE WICKER MAN, various Amateur Horror Films, MORE!

ART SHOW and AUCTION

For information and ART SHOW RULES and ENTRY FORMS, please send SASE to Art Show Chairperson, MARIA MAYER - PO Box 2262, Mission Station, Santa Clara, California 95055.

FANAC and FILKSINGING

We're always looking for new talent, new ideas, new filksongs - ANYTHING and EVERYTHING that's fan-made fun! For info or to send filksongs, please send a SASE to Chairperson MARCY ROBIN - 9441 LaRosa Dr., Temple City, California 91780.

"MAD HATTER TEA PARTY"

Competition judging of HATS, HEADRESSES, MASQUES, HELMETS, and "live model" HEADS, plus a real Alice in Wonderland Tea Party! Send a SASE to ShadowCon for rules and information. Roger Dicken will be among the judges.

2nd ANNUAL LITERARY CONTEST

First Prize: \$50.00 cash. For complete RULES and ENTRY information, send SASE to ShadowCon at the address below.

"CARNIVAL OF SOULS" and Costume Judging

Sunday Evening Gala in the Penthouse - Open Bar - AWARDS PRESENTATION, of course - watch the Fourth of July fireworks with us at the top of the Hyatt Hotel! Write to us for COSTUME info, please send SASE.

DEALERS

Tables are \$45, includes one membership. PLEASE reserve early! FANZINE DEALERS are requested to send a SASE to ShadowCon for information on sales. Half-tables are \$12.00 but do not include a membership. Please direct SALES inquiries to JEANNIE GRAHAM.

PSYCHIC HEALING

"Earth Energy for the '80's" Practical Discussion with Rev. Patricia Kearney and Rev. Marcella Thompson. Voluntary Private Sessions will be on Sunday by Appt.

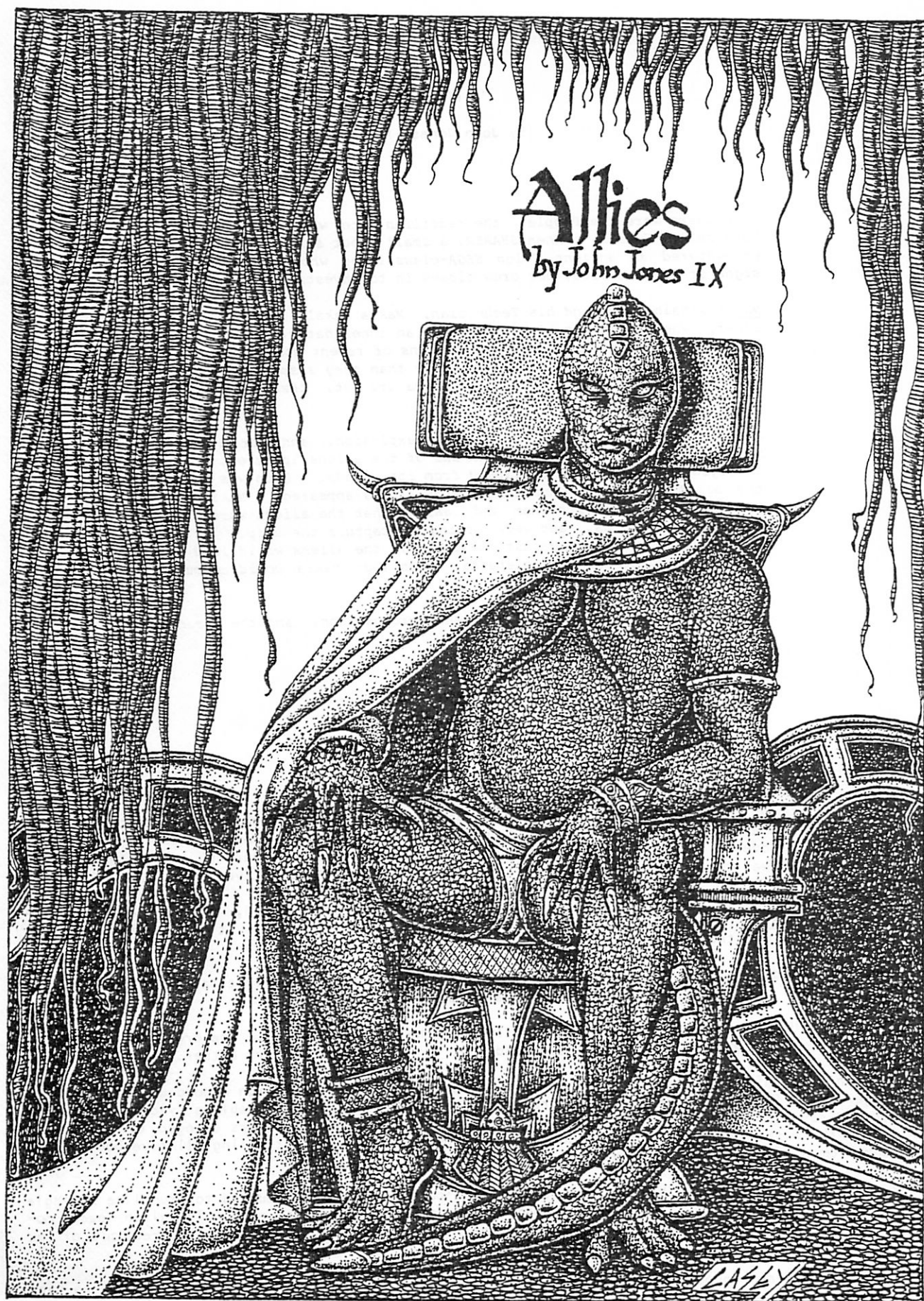
MEMBERSHIPS

\$15.00 & 3 SASEs until January 1, 1982 - \$20.00 & 2 SASEs until June 1, 1982 - \$25.00 at the door for full weekend, or \$10.00 per day. ALL inquiries MUST include a SASE. Please Make ALL checks and money orders payable to Barbara Fister-Liltz. There will be 2 Progress Reports, tentatively Jan. and May. Programming begins FRIDAY, July 2, at 6pm sharp! Hotel reservation cards at reduced rate by request.

SHADOWCON

8601A W. Cermak Rd. • No. Riverside, Illinois 60546

All guest appearances are tangent to availability subject to professional commitments. SHADOWCON is a non-profit group - registered with the State of Pennsylvania.



"Allies"

(By John Jones IX)

Once there were the People, the reptilian race who created the robots called Cylons. When SHARER, a small scout ship of the People, encountered an ancient Cylon SEGA-class liner whose debris showed signs of organic life, her crew closed in to investigate.

Nai (Captain) Urun and his Technician, Makra Dakal, crossed to the liner, where Urun cut his way through an inner hatch. When he and Makra entered the ship, they found signs of recent combat, and also evidence that the ship was even older than they suspected. While examining a storeroom, Urun heard Makra cry out, then there was a sudden explosion.

A Cylon emerged from the smoke of the explosion, and for a moment Makra's life was in danger. Then one of the aliens appeared, killed the Cylon, and promptly collapsed from its wounds. Urun was giving the alien first aid when three more aliens appeared. Makra made telepathic contact with them and learned that the aliens were prisoners of the Cylons, and were trying to capture the ship. If the People would aid them against the Cylons, the aliens would lead the way to one of their own telepaths, with whom Makra could communicate.

Urun and Makra agreed to the aliens' proposition, and the strange allies moved off into battle.

PART VII

They hadn't taken more than ten steps along the passageway when the smoke got so thick the alien leader signalled a halt. All five fighters spread out, guns drawn and ready. The two People were no longer each covered by an alien's weapon, but obviously the alien leader no longer thought this important. It was more important to have a clear field of fire for all five guns.

Once again, the alien leader was thinking exactly as Urun would have done, facing the same situation. Definitely, these beings knew war. If today's battle went well, it might not be the last time the aliens and the People fought side by side.

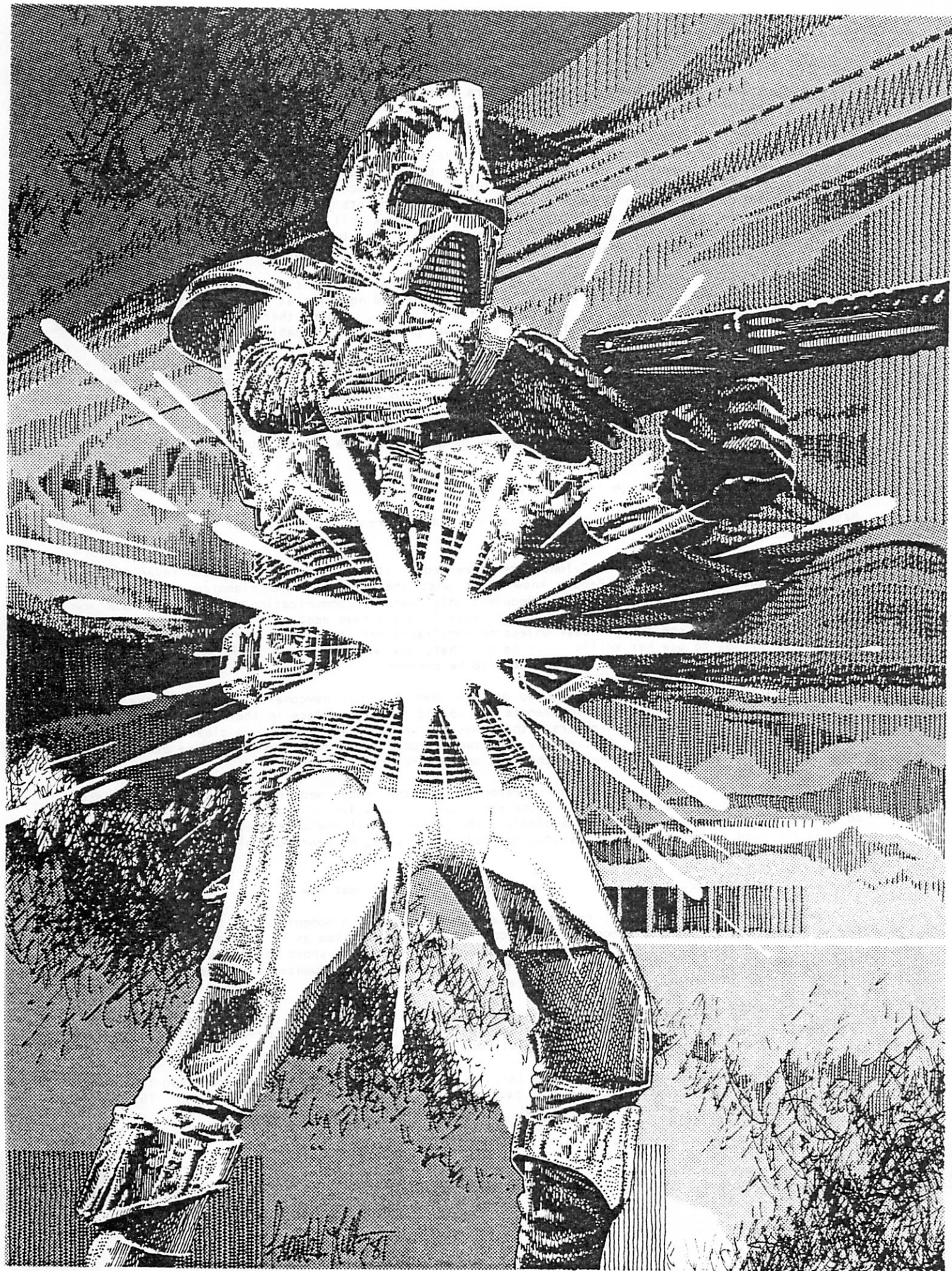
Urun tried to discipline his thoughts. They hadn't even fought the first battle as allies, let alone won it. He could hardly afford to let a dream distract him now.

Yet for once Urun's thoughts wouldn't go exactly where he told them to go. The dream no longer drew his eyes from the smoke-filled passageway ahead, but it wouldn't disappear, either.

What Urun's own efforts couldn't do, the Cylons did for him. An explosion echoed up and down the passageway, so loud that everyone's ears rang. Another explosion, unmistakably a Cylon disintegrating, and several pieces of hot metal whined past the five fighters. Others clanged off the wall. All five threw themselves flat on the deck as if they had one mind controlling all five bodies. A scream from a living throat followed the flying pieces.

The alien leader raised his head and called down the passageway, what sounded to Urun like a single word spoken as a question. The same word came back, followed by several more. The alien leader motioned his own comrades and the two People to their feet, as two more aliens staggered out of the smoke.

Their clothes were ragged and smoke-stained, and the face and hands of one were so black it was hard



to believe he wasn't badly burnt. The newcomers stared at the two People, then turned to the leader. A conversation followed, short but apparently quite intense, as far as Urun could tell. He hoped the intensity he sensed in the newcomers wasn't an intense distrust or fear of the People!

He also saw that even if Makra and the aliens' telepath were able to exchange the vocabularies of their respective languages, there were still going to be communications problems. The People had fairly rigid jaws and stiff lips. They modulated their speech primarily with the long, flexible tongues their cliff-climbing ancestors used for picking insects out of crevices. The aliens had flexible lips and jaws which could move from side to side as well as vertically, but their tongues seemed less mobile and were certainly much shorter, barely reaching beyond the teeth. Neither race was likely to be able to pronounce all the words in the other's language, even if they knew them.

Sign language wasn't going to help much, either. Non-verbal communication among the People relied heavily on the positions of claws and tail. The aliens had no tails at all, and their claws were vestigial, mere horny coverings for the tips of their fingers. Again, there were going to be a good many movements in each race's vocabulary the other was physically incapable of matching.

At this point, the alien leader broke off to look toward the People, and Urun noticed Makra had fallen into her mental concentration position again. When the alien turned back to his conversation, she came out of it and slid across the deck to within whispering distance of Urun.

"The new ones are saying there's...something...dangerous -- back where they came from. The leader is angry. I think he is considering another way of getting at the Cylons, but only in his own mind. That thought isn't very strong yet."

"All right. But that's enough listening for now, I think."

Makra shook her head slightly. "With five aliens and you around me, I'm better protected. I don't have to be quite so alert."

That was true, at least as far as Cylons were concerned. It was also true that with seven fighters working together, the more the People knew about what their allies were planning, the safer for everyone. Since Makra's skills were the People's only means of communication -- well, "dilemma" was an understatement for this situation. Or at least it would have been, if Urun didn't know Makra would do exactly what she thought best unless he humiliated her in front of the aliens by giving her a direct order not to use her skills. If he did that, she would be angry afterward, and right now she would think he was an idiot. She might also be correct.

The conversation among the aliens came to an end when the two newcomers nodded and the leader pointed back down the passageway. The People got up and fell into place in the middle of the newly-reinforced squad. With seven fighters, there was no way to give everyone a clear field of fire while they were on the move. Fortunately, the two newcomers, who might not trust the People, were ahead of them. The only alien behind them was one of the original three.

They retraced their steps as far as the storeroom, then the leader and one of the newcomers slipped inside while the others mounted guard in the passageway. Makra leaned against the wall and tried to do another light mental reading. Suddenly, she jerked as if she'd gripped a charged wire and clapped one hand to her forehead. As Urun hurried to her side, he heard the aliens' voices from inside the storeroom.

"Anger... The wounded one killed..." she whispered. "Can't hear how."

Urun suspected the anger himself, from the tones of the voices. A moment later, he was sure, as the aliens strode out of the storeroom. The newcomer's face was twisted as if he were in pain, and he swung his gun muzzle toward Makra. Urun was about two heartbeats short of attacking him when the leader clamped down on the other's wrist with a strong hand and squeezed until he took his finger off the trigger and pointed the gun elsewhere.

There was another discussion -- more of an argument, actually -- with the newcomer against the leader. Urun whispered a warning to Makra against trying to listen while the newcomer was radiating so much anger, then slipped into the storeroom without anyone's noticing.

As he'd expected, the wounded alien they'd left in the storeroom was dead. He recognised the cause, too. Mouth and nostrils were stuffed with packing material, so he'd suffocated slowly. This was a painful death, and it left an ugly corpse; it was one the Cylons inflicted when they wanted to spread terror among living opponents. The aliens seemed to be angry, rather than terrified, but at least one was so angry he seemed to think the People might have done it.

With no one ready to stop him, Urun searched the storeroom himself. He slipped from one pile of containers to another, staying under cover as much as possible until he was sure there was neither

Cylon nor alien life anywhere. Even after that, it took him a while to finish the search. The Cylons aboard the SEGA were not particularly good housekeepers, it seemed, and the room itself was large enough to hold all the crew cabins of SHARER put together.

At the far end of the room, he found the entrance to a ventilation duct. Clearly, the alien who came out of the storeroom came through that. Just as clearly, the Cylon who'd killed the wounded alien hadn't. The duct was easily large enough for one of the People, and probably a safe fit for one of the aliens. They were a little taller than the People, but more slender. It would have been a tight fit for a Cylon, and the Cylons never went into places where there was a tight fit. They were less flexible than most organic life forms, and could more easily get stuck or be unable to use their weapons in cramped quarters. So they used maintenance robots in places like the duct, and it was no maintenance robot who'd killed the wounded alien!

By the time Urun came out of the storeroom, the argument was winding down. The leader seemed to be winning, and the other newcomer, the one burnt black, seemed to be joining in against his comrade. He was gesturing vigorously, pointing at the People, then at his comrade's gun, then shaking his head. In fact, he was moving so well and so easily that Urun found it hard to believe he'd been burnt at all.

Before Urun could get a closer look at the burnt alien, the argument ended. The leader motioned toward the storeroom, then went inside. Everyone followed him to the mouth of the ventilation duct. The last alien to pass the body tore a piece of covering off one of the crates and spread it over the dead face.

"How are you?" Urun whispered to Makra.

"Better. But I don't think I'll try reading him now. It's pretty certain he wants to lead us down the duct. I don't know whether it's for escape or for a surprise attack on the Cylons."

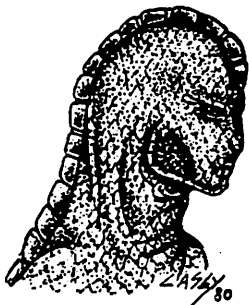
"Probably an attack. Remember how they reacted to finding the body. Just..." Urun caught himself before he finished with "...like the People used to, when we thought we had the strength to win." Ten Cylons dead for every one from the People had been the rule a century ago. Then the Cylons started taking advantage of the rule to lay too many traps, and first the necessary strength and then the necessary courage left the People. An excitement he hadn't felt in years filled Urun at seeing beings willing to fight the Cylons tooth and claw, as they had to be fought.

Three of the aliens went back to the storeroom door. The power to close it was off, so they closed it manually, then sealed it by melting the lock and two edges with their guns.

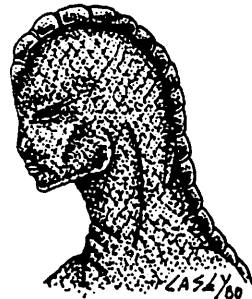
Urun watched this dubiously. Certainly any Cylons around here were more likely to come along the passageway. Sealing the door would delay them while the aliens and People were scrambling along the duct. On the other hand, the attack through the duct might fail, and the aliens and People might have to make a quick retreat. Then it would be them the fused door would delay, perhaps fatally.

On the whole, Urun thought the alien leader was making a mistake in having the door fused shut. He also intended to keep quiet about it. In combat, there could be only one leader, and when there were two newly-met races without much in common except that leader, it was even more important to support him.

So when the leader vanished down the duct, Urun caught Makra's eyes, then grinned as he hooked his gun to his belt. He only waited until the alien who'd thought the People were the killers went down the duct; he didn't want that one behind him with a gun. Then he quietly spoke an ancient prayer to the Mistress of Warriors, a prayer he hadn't used since he left Scout School, and followed the aliens.



(To be continued.)





.... WHY, YOU ELECTRONIC MONKEY'S MOTHER'S SON

4/18/80

EDITORIAL: REALITY AND THE COLONIAL CONCLAVE

Here it is, time for yet another issue of "Purple and Orange?" -- the one-shot BATTLESTAR GALACTICA fanzine aimed at getting people to write to ABC-TV in an effort to prevent the network from cancelling the series. We didn't succeed in our initial efforts, unless one considers GALACTICA 1980 a success, but we did accomplish something no one expected -- we discovered just how many fans of the series wanted more than the networks were willing to give, and we discovered just how many of you want to keep BATTLESTAR GALACTICA alive.

It's a remarkable thing to see, the birth of a whole new fandom. We just hope no one among our many readers loses sight of the fact that the GALACTICA is still a fantasy, not a part of our real world -- at least not yet, not for a very long time. Like STAR WARS, like STAR TREK before it, GALACTICA is an exposure to aspects of a world that might be, some day. Parts of it -- like the long war with the Cylons -- are not in any way desirable, but the freedom to travel in space is something most of us would like to live to see. Perhaps some of us will.

In our real world, we've been seeing real space exploration. Voyager I and Voyager II have given us more information on Jupiter and Saturn in a few short months than astronomers have gleaned in centuries. Even today, many people look at the Voyager photographs and marvel at the skill of the "artist who painted them." Some of those photographs are indeed beautiful, resembling fine art. But they are photographs -- reality, not an artist's imagination. They represent what is really there, what is waiting for us when we finally travel from this small planet and see for ourselves the wonders our universe contains. Who, then, will find fantasy more thrilling than reality?

* * * * *

This will be the last issue of "Purple and Orange?" before our Colonial Conclave in December, and we want to use some of this space to remind our readers that we still need their help. We are now planning a number of special events for the Conclave: a costuming workshop dealing with both GALACTICA and general SF/fantasy costuming; a seminar/round-table discussion on the history of the Twelve Colonies, in which all attendees will be invited to participate (we hope to tape this seminar, and print at least a partial Colonial history in a future issue of "Purple and Orange?"); panels for writers, editors, and artists dealing with GALACTICA and other fan fiction; a trivia contest (if we find enough interest in it!); and a contest to find the best captions for a number of GALACTICA posters -- with the winners getting to keep their posters. And, of course, BATTLESTAR GALACTICA and other science fiction/fantasy videotapes. Any other suggestions? Write and let us know -- soon!

Another feature of the Conclave will be a BATTLESTAR GALACTICA art exhibit. We have not yet determined whether this will be within the Windycon Art Show; the matter is still under consideration. If not, we will provide our own security for the art put on display. Any art brought to Windycon for auction will naturally be a part of the Art Show, but anything brought strictly for display purposes may be shown in a separate location, depending on Windycon decisions about hanging fees and display space. We hope to know more by some time in November and should be able to release the information in flyer form at that time.

The Colonial Conclave will also feature a Saturday-afternoon masquerade. We know many people cannot get to Chicago in time for the regular Windycon masquerade on Friday night, and we feel they should not be deprived of the fun of a costume event. This masquerade will not be limited to BATTLESTAR GALACTICA; all media-related costumes are welcome. Award categories have not yet been finalized but will probably include Best General Costume, Best STAR WARS (we know there are a lot of STAR WARS fans among you!), Best Alien, Most Humorous, and -- of course -- Best GALACTICA. The judges will all be members of the Conclave Committee and promise to be impartial.

There will be a special place at Windycon for Conclave registration. We will not be charging any additional membership; your Windycon membership will get you into the Colonial Conclave. However, we will be issuing a Conclave membership packet, so be sure and check in with us.

We cannot emphasise strongly enough that the Colonial Conclave is a general media SF affair. Everyone is welcome, not just GALACTICA fans. Media science fiction is sadly neglected in much of the Midwest, but many of us feel most SF and fantasy fans first discover their interests through the media. STAR TREK did wonders in arousing interest in science fiction; STAR WARS did as much, if not more. And BATTLESTAR GALACTICA has done its part as well. Whatever your interests in media science fiction, the Colonial Conclave will welcome you warmly.

And now, on to other matters.

Issue #10 of "Purple and Orange?" will be available at Windycon VIII. Advance information on it will not be available, however, until just before the convention, and it will not be sold anywhere before that time. So please don't get impatient with us and write for it until after Christmas!

And, speaking of Christmas, Issue #10, and the end of the year, OSIRIS Publications is still looking for artists for the 1982 GALACTICA calendar. Please contact us as soon as possible about this, as we want to have the calendar in print by Thanksgiving. If we don't have enough art, we won't be able to print the calendar.

And, yet again, a closing plea from the staff of OSIRIS Publications and "Purple and Orange?" -- we are still looking for writers, artists, and anyone else willing and able to work on our publications. We don't care what groups you may be affiliated with; we're not going to turn you away because you are a member of some club or other, or because you may have done some work for some other fanzine somewhere, or because your views of the GALACTICA universe don't happen to coincide with the story line created for the battlestar OSIRIS. There are other ships, other versions of the GALACTICA universe -- and we are more than willing to explore them all. But we can't know about them unless you tell us! And please remember, the OSIRIS version of the GALACTICA universe is not law!

What we print for you can only be as good as what you submit to us. Write to us, talk to us -- and help us make our publications the best they can possibly be. Without you, it can't be done -- by us or anyone else. We need to know what you like, what you dislike, what you want, what you don't. So write to us, let us know -- and help us to unite GALACTICA fandom into the fellowship it should be!

Never forget -- you can survive without us, but we need you!

Until the Conclave, may the Lords of Kobol bless you all.



---Joy Harrison
Senior Editor



There is no Try!

NEWS BULLETIN: "Purple and Orange?" has just been informed by a reliable source (!) that WFLD-TV, Channel 32 in Chicago (a Field Communications station), will be broadcasting BATTLESTAR GALACTICA some time this fall. We are told this will be the two-hour theatrical release of the film. Watch for it!

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